

# Information for patients who have received an unexpected blood transfusion

Note: This leaflet should be read alongside the NHS Blood and Transplant patient information leaflet **'Will I need a blood transfusion?'**

While you were in hospital, it was necessary for you to receive a blood transfusion. There are many reasons why patients may need a transfusion, some of which are discussed in the 'Will I need a blood transfusion?' leaflet. However do please ask a member of your healthcare team about why you needed a blood transfusion. They will be able to answer any questions you may have.

## Are blood transfusions safe?

Yes, the risk that a blood transfusion may make you ill is very low. More information about any potential infection risks, and all the measures that are taken to ensure your safety, is included in the leaflet 'Will I need a blood transfusion?'.

## I'm a blood donor. Can I still donate?

As a precautionary measure to reduce the risk of transmitting variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD), people who have received a blood transfusion since 1980 are not currently able to donate blood.

## Do I need to tell my doctor?

The hospital should include information in the discharge letter to your GP to tell them that you have had a blood transfusion, and to explain why it was carried out. The hospital should give you a copy of this letter; if they don't, you can ask the hospital for a copy.

## Additional information

If you are interested in finding out more about blood transfusion and have access to the internet, you may find the following websites useful:

### **NHS Choices**

[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Blood-transfusion/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Blood-transfusion/Pages/Introduction.aspx)

### **UK Transfusion Services**

[www.transfusionguidelines.org.uk/index.aspx](http://www.transfusionguidelines.org.uk/index.aspx)

This leaflet was prepared by NHS Blood and Transplant in collaboration with the National Blood Transfusion Committee. Healthcare professionals can obtain further supplies by accessing [www3.access-24.co.uk](http://www3.access-24.co.uk) and entering their Regional Transfusion Committee code.

If you do not have a code please call **01865 381042**.

The public can get copies of this leaflet by calling **01865 381042**.

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) is a Special Health Authority within the NHS, and provides the blood that patients receive. In order to plan for future blood demands, information about which patients receive blood needs to be gathered. We may ask a hospital or GP to provide limited medical information on a sample of patients who have received blood transfusions.

Any information that is passed on to NHSBT is held securely, and the rights of these patients are protected under the Data Protection Act (1998).

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### **NHS Blood and Transplant**

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) saves and improves lives by providing a safe and reliable supply of blood components, organs, stem cells, tissues and related services to the NHS, and other UK health services.

#### **For more information**

**Visit** [nhsbt.nhs.uk](http://nhsbt.nhs.uk)

**Email** [enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@nhsbt.nhs.uk)

**Call** **0300 123 23 23**