

Refusing a blood transfusion

If you have an objection to having a blood transfusion for religious or other reasons it is extremely important to discuss this with your doctor.

PLEASE
TELL US



CareFlight encourages you to “Please Tell Us” if you feel unsafe, see anything unsafe, or have any questions or concerns regarding your care, or the care of the person you are with.

Feedback

We welcome compliments, comments, and complaints in order to ensure we continue to provide high quality care to you. You can provide your feedback through the following means:

1. Emailing us on clinical-feedback@careflight.org
2. Scanning the QR code below
3. Asking a CareFlight staff member to submit feedback on your behalf

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language, please contact us.



SCAN ME

Contact Us

CareFlight Ltd

GPO BOX 9829
IN YOUR CAPITAL CITY

NSW | 02 9843 5100
NT | 08 8928 9777

info@careflight.org

www.careflight.org

MS-303-04



CareFlight
Blood Transfusion



What is a blood transfusion?

What are the risks?

Australia has one of the safest blood supplies in the world but as with all medical procedures, a blood transfusion is not free from risk.

The most common risks of transfusion include:

- Minor reactions such as a mild temperature or skin rash.
- Excess fluid in your system may cause breathing difficulties, especially in older people and those with heart problems

CareFlight clinicians are trained to watch closely for reactions and to respond quickly.

How safe is the blood?

Australia has one of the safest blood supplies in the world.

Donor blood is tested for certain viruses, including HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and human T-lymphotropic virus.

The chance of contracting one of these viruses from a blood transfusion is minimal to negligible.

Sterile, single-use equipment is used, and other precautions are taken that reduce the chance of complications and ensure all blood products are free of contamination.

CareFlight clinicians manage and administer blood in accordance with robust internal and national procedures and clinical guidelines.

Why do patients need blood transfusions?

Some common reasons for a blood transfusion are:

1. Large blood loss from surgery, major accidents or childbirth.
2. You are not able to make enough healthy blood cells due to illness
3. Lack of red blood cells (anaemia) due to a gradual blood loss, that cannot be treated with iron therapy

Your doctor will tell you the specific reason.

What blood will I be given?

If there is time, hospitals will 'crossmatch' blood to check compatibility between the donor and you and label the units of blood to clearly identify you as the recipient. If crossmatched blood is transported with you, these labels will be used to ensure you receive the blood, or blood products, specifically checked for you.

In the pre-hospital environment (in an emergency) CareFlight utilises group O blood that is considered the universal donor and the safest to give a patient in an emergency.

A blood transfusion is a routine medical procedure in which pre-packaged, screened and donated blood is given through a tube which is connected to a needle inserted in the arm.

You may feel a prick or a sting when the needle is inserted into your vein, and some pressure as the blood is transfused, but most patients will not feel any pain or discomfort.

This leaflet aims to provide information to patients who may need a blood transfusion.

