

# Receiving your own blood during your operation

An information guide



# Receiving your own blood during your operation

## What does this mean?

Giving your own blood during the operation is an alternative to receiving blood from a donor during or after your operation. This procedure is available for some patients. It is known as intraoperative cell salvage.

## How does it work?

Blood is often lost during surgery. In many cases blood volume can be maintained using various fluids which are known as volume expanders. However if blood loss is expected to be large, your surgeon or anaesthetist can use a device designed to collect the blood from the site of bleeding. This blood is then filtered and washed and returned to your circulation through a drip. This device is called a cell saver machine.

## What are the benefits?

Although in most cases blood transfusions are given without complications, there are a number of reasons why you may prefer to receive your own blood:

- Intraoperative cell salvage is not considered a dangerous or risky procedure.
- Your own blood is unique. It is the perfect match and so there should be no ill-effects, such as fever or rashes which can happen when receiving blood from another person.
- It avoids the very small risk of acquiring an infection from donated blood.

## **Can anyone receive his or her own blood?**

This depends upon the type of operation you are having and is not suitable for everyone. Your surgeon and anaesthetist will point out the risks and benefits of the procedure. In order to be able to receive your own blood, you must be having an operation that is known to cause a large amount of blood loss.

## **Why isn't it suitable for everyone?**

Not all operations result in enough blood loss to enable cell salvage to be used. For some operations cell salvage is not recommended e.g. some bowel surgery.

## **What happens before the operation?**

Your surgeon or anaesthetist will discuss the possibility of receiving this procedure for your intended operation.

## **Asking for consent?**

We must, by law, obtain your written consent to any operation or procedure. You will be given a full explanation of the treatment, its advantages and disadvantages, alternatives and any risks or side effects. If you are unsure about any aspect of the treatment proposed, please ask a member of staff.

## **Will I still need to receive blood from a donor?**

If the amount collected by the cell saver machine is less than your needs then you may need extra blood, or blood components, in addition to your own blood. These additional units will be obtained in the usual way from the National Blood Service. If you wish to have your own blood but do not wish to have donated blood or blood products this is also an option. Please tell us your wishes.

## **Where can I get further information?**

The hospital transfusion practitioners may be able to help with any further questions. You can contact them via switchboard on 0161 624 0420

**If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service**

Jeśli angielski nie jest twoim pierwszym językiem i potrzebujesz pomocy, skontaktuj się z działem tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych

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**For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service**

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