

Clinical Laboratory Test Update

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Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on the Blood Supply at NMH

The regional and national blood supply may be potentially severely impacted by the coronavirus emergency. As public concern grows and there are widespread closures of schools, businesses, places of worship and other community facilities, our blood suppliers are confronting many blood drive cancellations and difficulties recruiting donors to come to collection facilities.

Because of this situation, our main blood supplier has requested that all hospitals reduce blood bank inventories of RBCs, plasma, platelets and cryoprecipitate to 75% of our normal levels. Also, they may not always be able to totally fill our routine daily standing shipments.

Accordingly, the NMH Blood Bank will be closely monitoring our inventory and our orders. We recommend adherence to the NMH Blood Transfusion Committee guidelines for blood component therapy, unless there are medical exceptions. These can be found at [NMInteractive > Departments > NMH Departments > Blood Bank > Policies > CCG 08.0017 Indications for the Transfusion of Blood Products in the Adult Population](#).

For RBCs these guidelines include:

Hgb <7 g/dL in asymptomatic non-cardiac patients and hemodynamically stable critically ill patients, or Hgb <8 g/dL and orthopedic or cardiac surgery, other clinically significant cardiopulmonary disease, acute neurologic injury or stem cell transplants.

For platelets, these include:

Platelet count <10,000/uL (prophylactic)
Platelet count <20,000/uL and central venous catheter placement
Platelet count <50,000/uL with active bleeding or invasive procedure, or
Platelet count <100,000/uL and central nervous system bleeding or procedure

For stable anemic patients, one RBC unit at a time should be given with clinical reassessment before additional units are given. Each unit of platelets gives an immediate 25-30,000/uL increment in an average-sized nonrefractory adult, and only the minimum number of units needed should be given unless the post-transfusion platelet count is insufficient.

We wish to emphasize that there is NO evidence that coronaviruses are transmitted by blood transfusion.

The NMH Blood Bank will be monitoring our blood supply and demand carefully. If further conservation measures are needed, these will be developed in conjunction with hospital medical leadership and communicated accordingly.

Contact: Questions or concerns should be directed to: Glenn Ramsey MD, Medical Director of the Blood Bank, at gramsey@nmh.org or at 312.926.2513