

Advice for patients after a blood transfusion (as a day case) (page 1 of 2)

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This leaflet gives you advice on symptoms you may experience after a blood transfusion and what you should do about them.

Symptoms after a blood transfusion

After any blood transfusion, there is always a very small risk of side effects. These may happen within several hours, or may take up to 14 days.

The symptoms are usually caused by an immune reaction to the blood you have received.

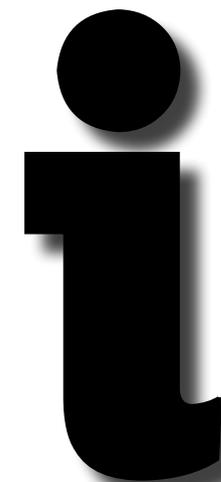
Usually the symptoms occur unpredictably, but regular blood transfusions may increase the chance of them happening. However, they are still uncommon even in patients that regularly receive blood transfusions.

What are the signs and symptoms?

The reaction is often mild, but it is still important to report any unusual or unexpected symptoms.

If you experience any of the following:

- a high temperature – feeling feverish, hot and clammy
- shivering or 'cold chills'
- breathing problems
- extreme tiredness
- blood in your urine
- passing much less, or very dark, urine
- itchy skin rash
- unexpected or unexplained bruising
- jaundice (yellow colour of the white of your eyes or your skin).



If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: customer care@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

Are any tests or examinations needed to confirm the diagnosis?

Some people may need to have blood tests to identify the cause of the symptoms.

What treatments are available?

Most symptoms can be treated with simple medications like paracetamol or an antihistamine (allergy medication). More serious reactions may need treatment in hospital (however this is rare). You may be given paracetamol or antihistamine before future blood transfusions if you have experienced symptoms before.

When should I contact my doctor?

Most symptoms are mild and get better quickly. It is important to seek medical advice if you experience severe symptoms (such as difficulty breathing) or are worried about your symptoms.

What are the next steps?

Please use the contact details shown below for advice, and tell them that you have recently had a blood transfusion and are experiencing any of the symptoms listed earlier:

Please contact your GP as soon as possible or call NHS 111. NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time.

In the rare event of an emergency (life threatening problems, for example difficulty with breathing), you must call 999 and ask for an ambulance.

New national rules say that anyone who has a blood transfusion cannot themselves be a blood donor in the future. Therefore please note that after this transfusion, you cannot donate blood. Further information is available at: www.blood.co.uk