Consent to Receive a Blood Transfusion

I have talked to my doctor or care team about:

1. Why I may need a blood transfusion.
2. The risks, benefits and side effects of transfusion—and the risks of not having one.
4. Options other than blood transfusion.
5. My questions.

No one has promised me a definite result from a blood transfusion.

Consent given in the hospital is valid for the entire hospital stay. Consent given in a clinic is valid for a year from the signature date.

I understand that I can change my mind. If I do, I must tell my doctor or team as soon as possible.

I have reviewed the details on pages 2 and 3 of this form. My questions have been answered. I agree to receive a blood transfusion, if ordered by my provider.

____________________________________________________________________
Signature of patient (or patient's authorized decision-maker)                Date            Time
____________________________________________________________________
Print name of patient’s authorized decision-maker         Relationship to patient
____________________________________________________________________
Signature of provider / practitioner                    Date            Time
____________________________________________________________________
To be completed by person(s) witnessing or verifying the patient’s or authorized decision-maker’s signature. Initial one of the three options below, and then sign the signature line.

• I have witnessed the signature of the patient or patient’s authorized decision-maker. ______ (initials) Or:
• I have heard the telephone consent of the patient’s authorized decision-maker. ______ (initials)
  ______ (initials) Or:
• I have verified that the signature completed before the patient’s arrival for the procedure is that of the patient or patient’s authorized decision-maker. ______ (initials)

____________________________________________________________________
Signature                  Date          Time
____________________________________________________________________
Signature of 2nd person witnessing authorized decision-maker’s telephone consent          Date          Time

Interpreter name (if used) Language/Organization                  Date          Time
Blood Transfusion

Questions and Answers

What is a transfusion?

During your treatment, we may need to give you blood. This is called a transfusion. Blood is given through a needle in the vein. It takes 1 to 4 hours. It may include:

- **Red blood cells.** These help replace blood you may have lost through bleeding or illness. They will increase your blood’s ability to carry oxygen.

- **Platelets.** These help blood to clot. They are used for low platelet counts and some bleeding disorders.

- **Plasma and cryoprecipitate.** These help the blood to clot. They are used to treat some bleeding disorders.

- **Granulocytes (a type of white blood cell).** These help your body fight infection.

If you need a transfusion, your doctor will prescribe one.

Before your transfusion, we will double check your identity for your safety.

What is the risk of getting a disease from a transfusion?

The chances are low. Donors are carefully screened before giving blood. Also, before any donated blood is used, it must be tested for infectious diseases.

Here are example of your risk for infection:

- **Hepatitis B:** 1 in 200,000
- **Hepatitis C:** 1 in 1.8 million
- **HIV:** 1 in 2.3 million
- **HTLV-I:** 1 in 3 million
- **Bacterial infection:**
  - 1 in 500,000 if receiving red blood cells
  - 1 in 75,000 if receiving platelets
- **Other infections (such as West Nile virus):** less than 1 in 7 million
- **Other diseases (such as Chagas’s disease):** very rare
- **Babesiosis:** rare, but risk is higher in summer
What are some of the side effects?

While most transfusions have no side effects, you could have some of the symptoms listed below. If you think you may be having a reaction, tell your doctor or nurse right away.

Common reactions include:

- Fever or chills
- Skin rash, hives, itching or flushing
- Wheezing or trouble breathing
- Chest or back pain
- Facial swelling
- New or ongoing cough
- Bruising
- Red or brown urine, or less urine output
- Jaundice (yellow eyes and skin)
- Irritation at the infusion site.

Some symptoms may occur up to four weeks after a transfusion. If you have any kind of symptom, call your doctor.

What are the risks of not having a transfusion?

- **Anemia** (low red blood cells). This might cause a fast heartbeat and make you feel weak, tired, and breathless. If severe, it might lead to organ failure and death.
- **Bleeding**. If your blood doesn't clot well, blood loss might lead to anemia, brain damage or death.
- **Weaker immune system**. Your body might be less able to fight infection or heal wounds.

Are there other options besides transfusion?

Medicine (such as erythropoietin or iron pills) can cause the body to make more red blood cells. It may take months to replace all of the red blood cells you have lost.

In some cases, you can donate your own blood before surgery. The blood may be given back to you during your surgery. This is called autologous donation.