

# **Experienced or Enfeebled?**

## ***Does Red Cell Storage Time Affect Patient Outcome?***



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**President & Chief Executive Officer  
Puget Sound Blood Center**

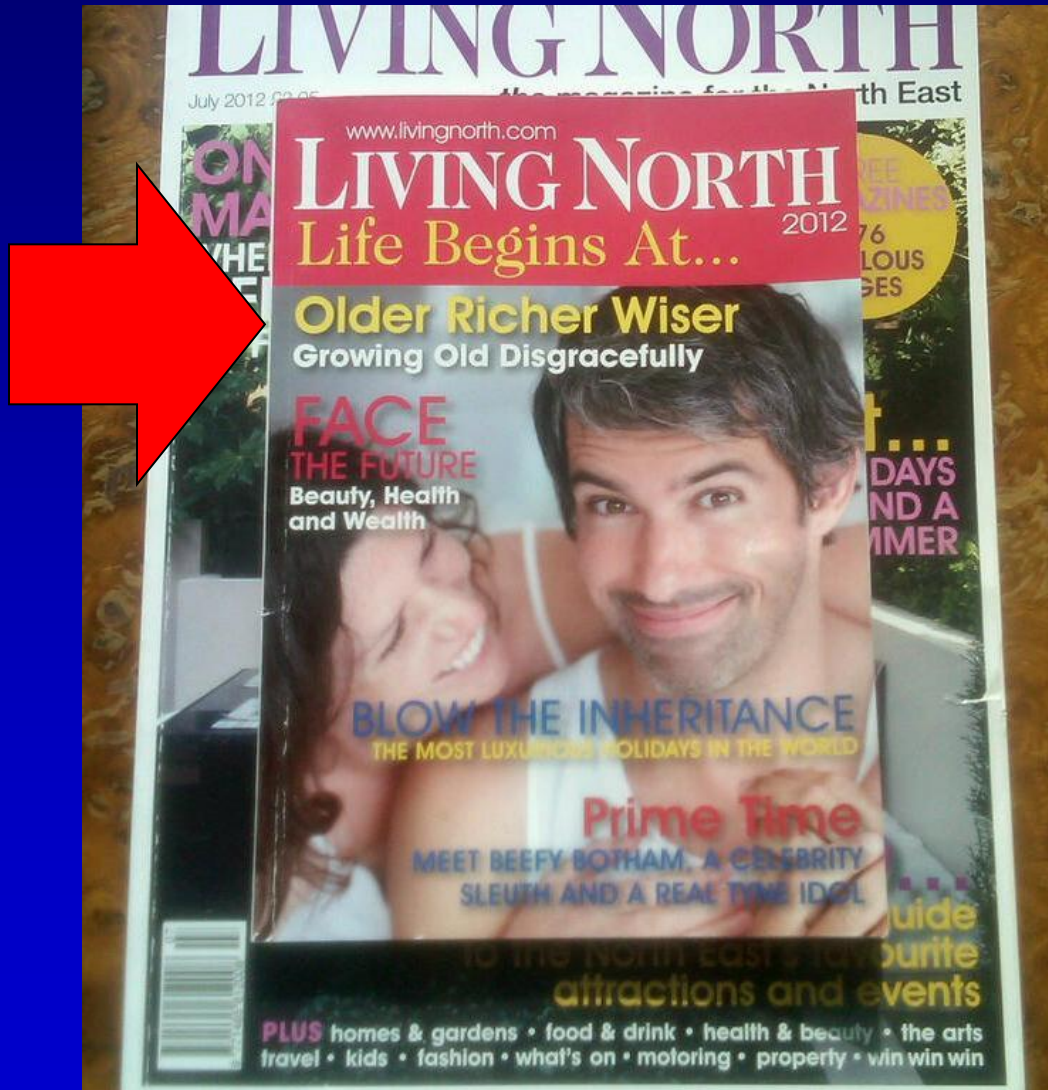
**Professor of Medicine and of Laboratory Medicine  
University of Washington**

**Seattle, Washington**

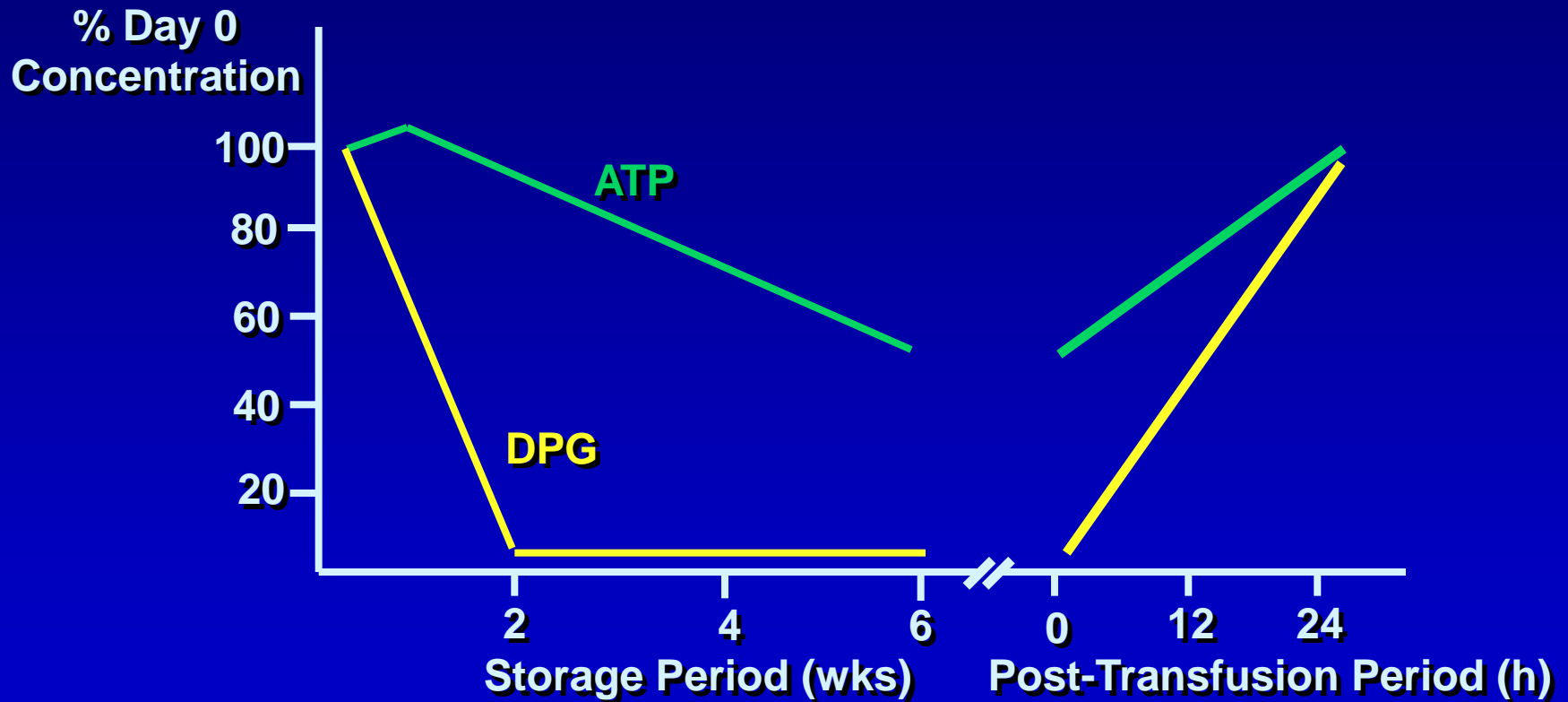
# Experienced or Enfeebled?



# Experienced or Enfeebled?



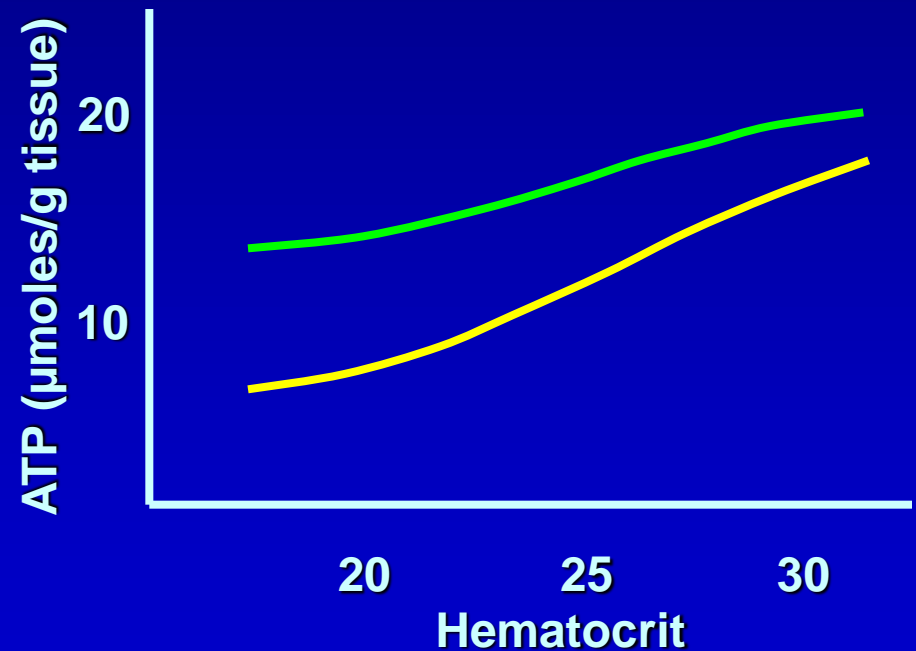
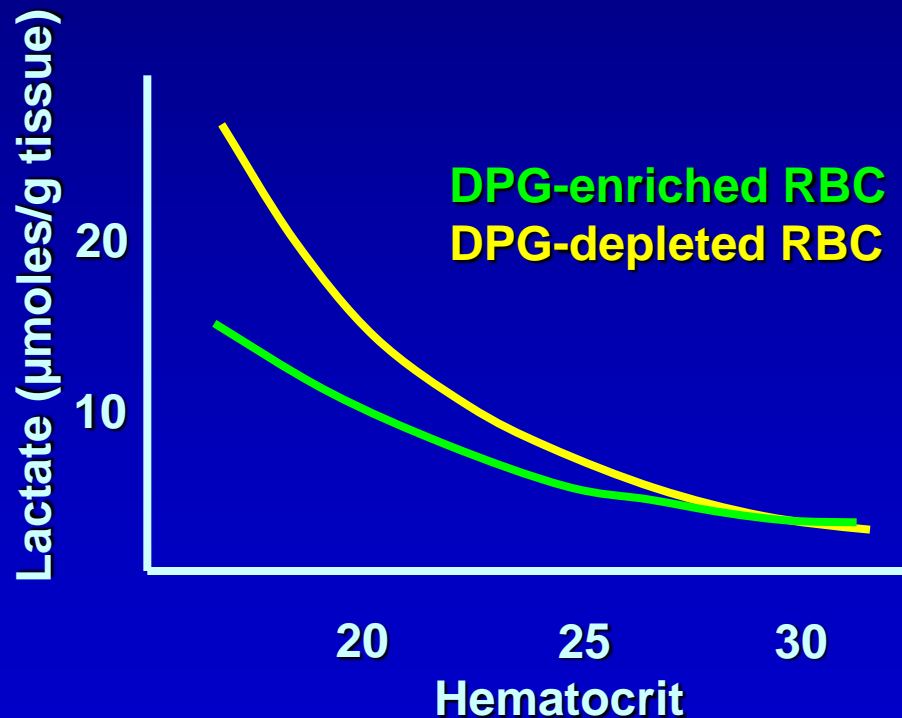
# Red Cell Physiology and “The Storage Lesion”



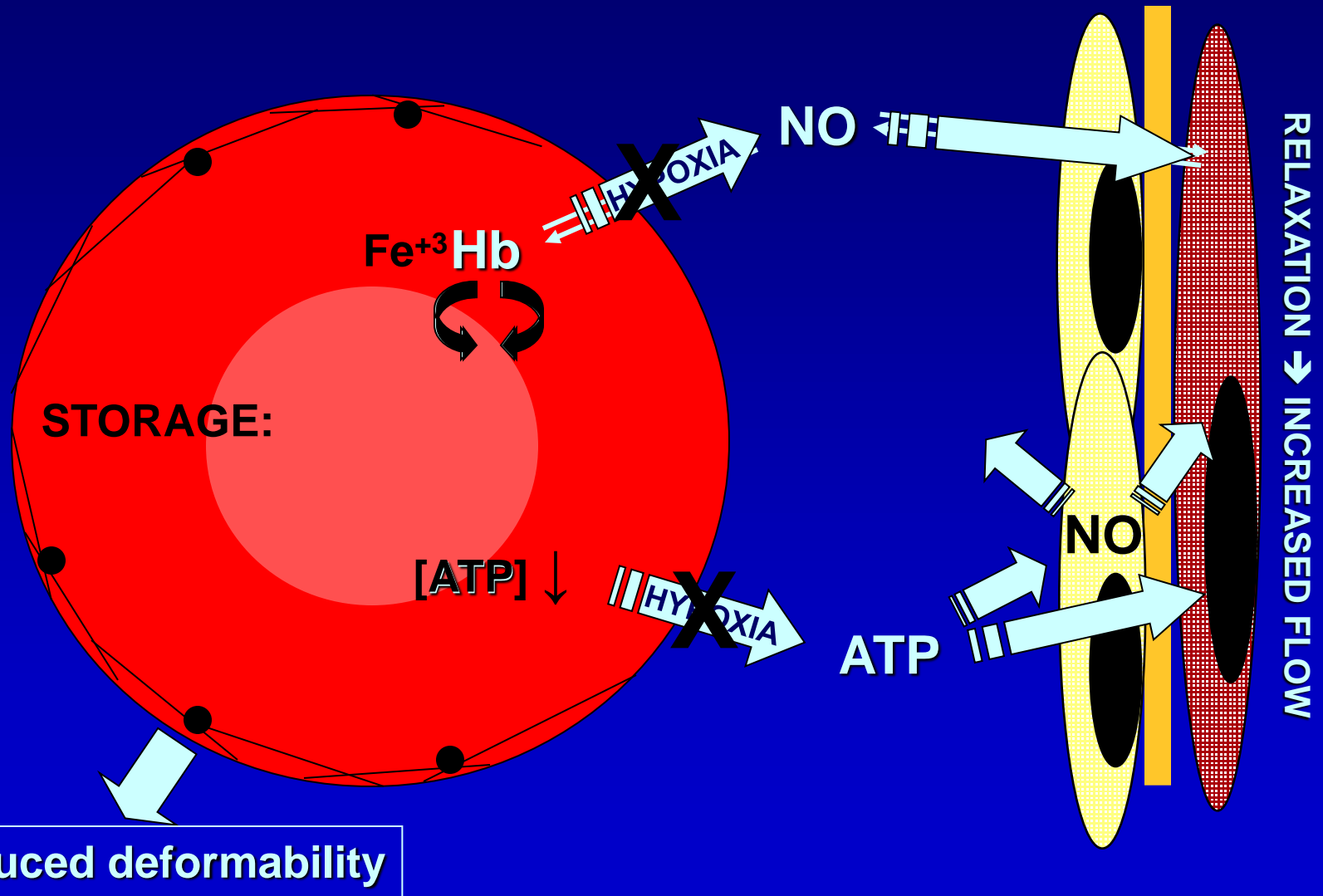


# DPG Effect on Cerebral Metabolism

*Murine Exchange Transfusion → Carotid Occlusion Model*

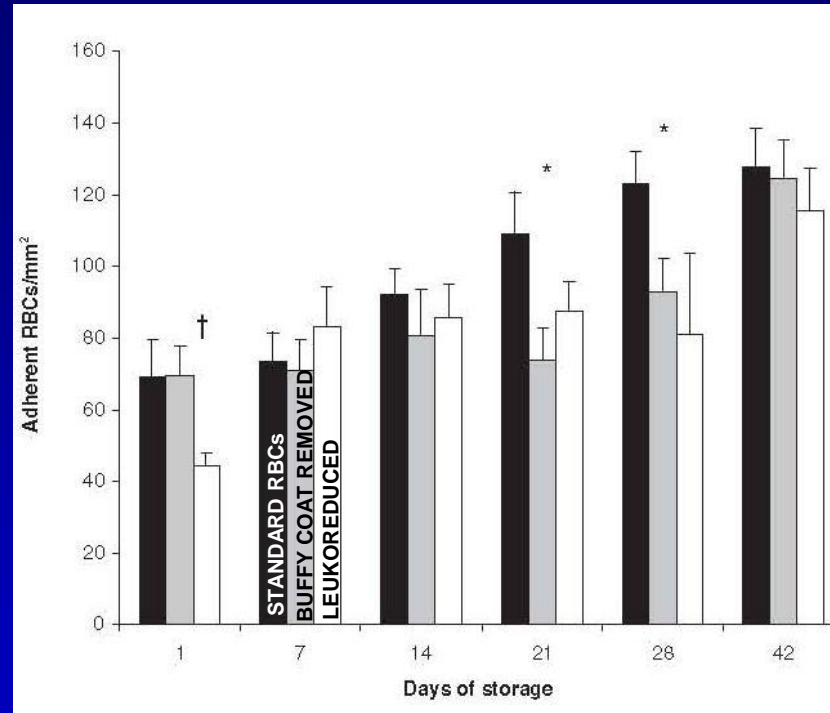


# Red Cell Physiology and “The Storage Lesion”



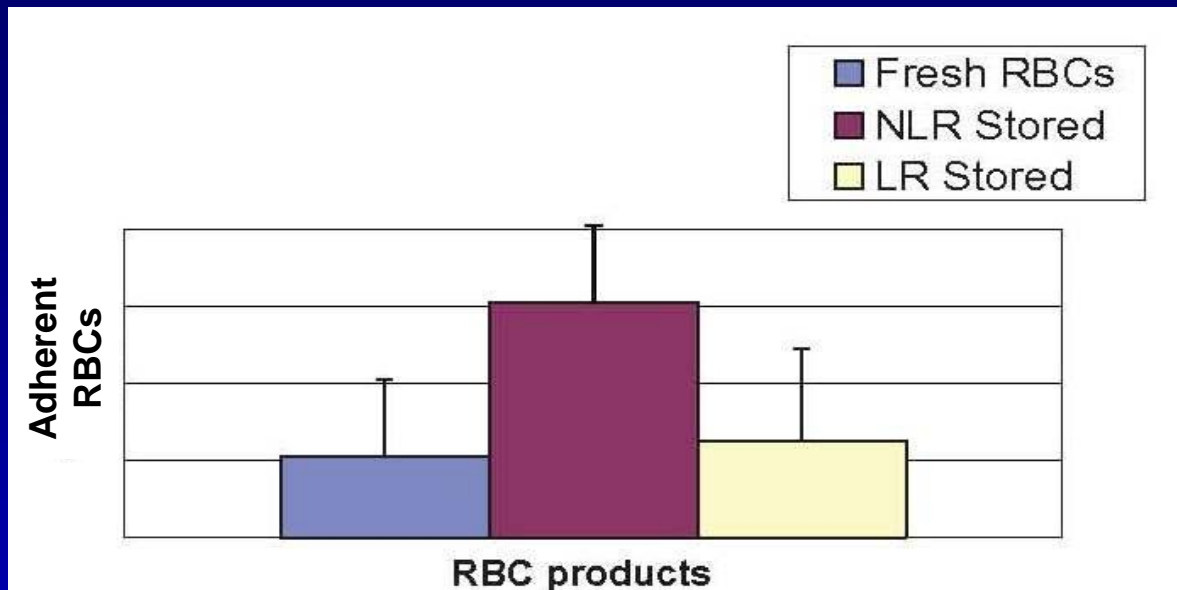
# Red Cell Storage and Blood Flow

Adherence of RBCs to HUVECs with increasing storage time

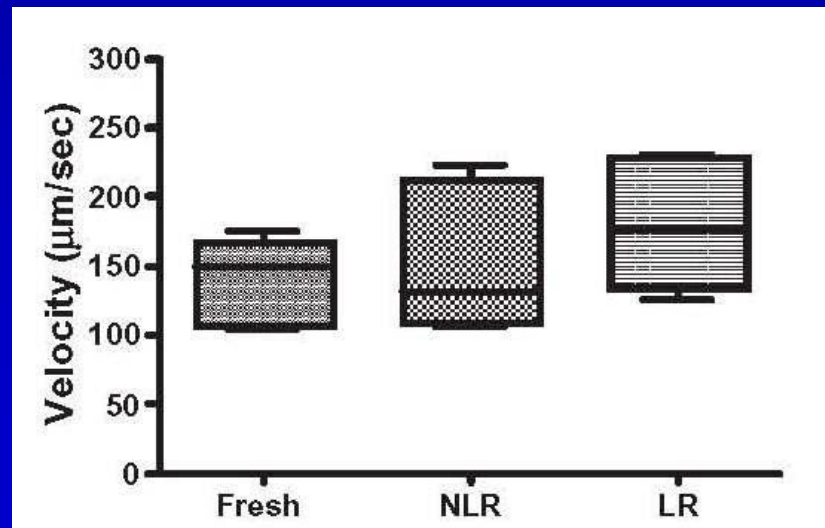


Increasing adherence with greater storage duration.

# Red Cell Storage and Blood Flow



***BUT...***

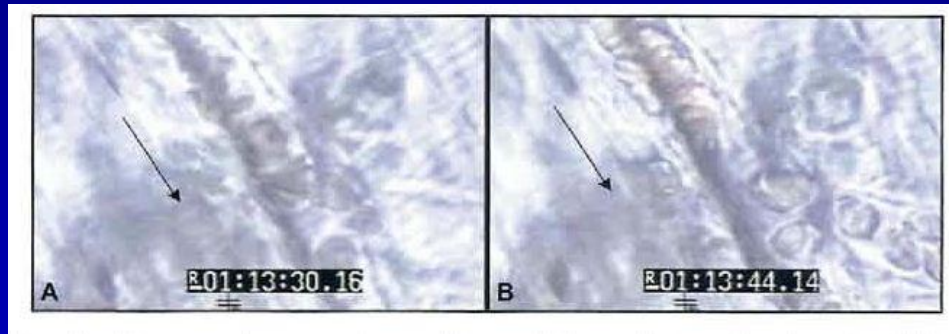
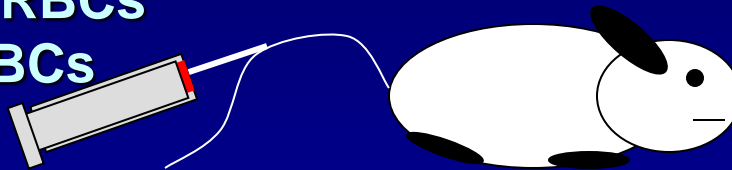




# Red Cell Storage and Blood Flow

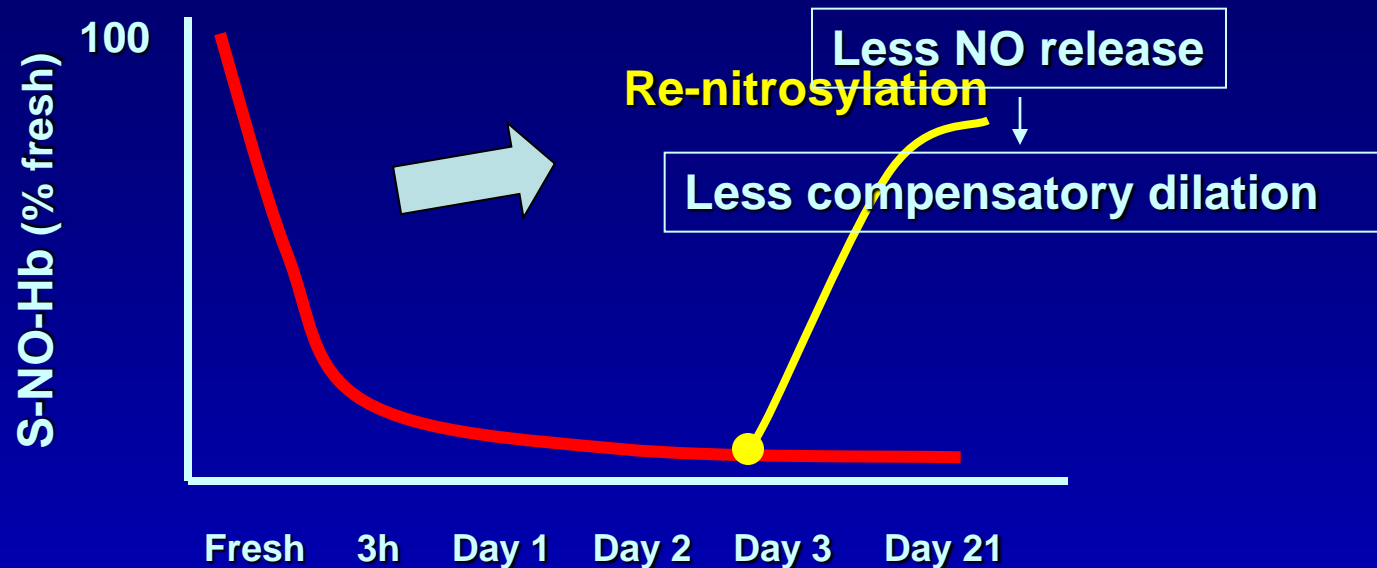
+ 1 mL

- *fresh* RBCs
- *old* RBCs



**Reduction in capillary flow  
but not flow in arterioles**

# Red Cell Physiology and “The Storage Lesion”



Alternative?

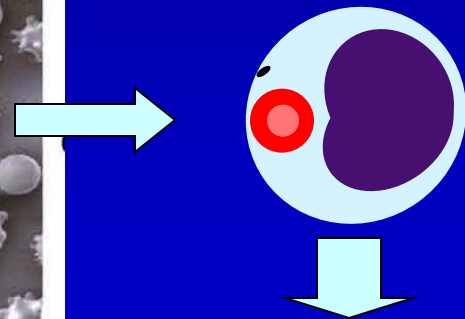
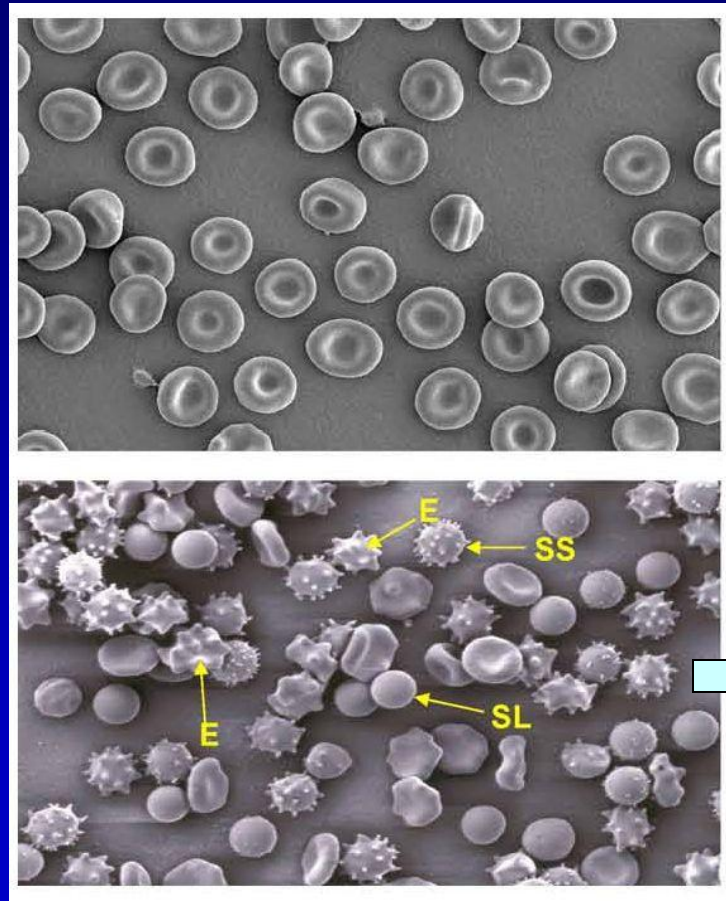


Primary artery blood flow model

significant effect

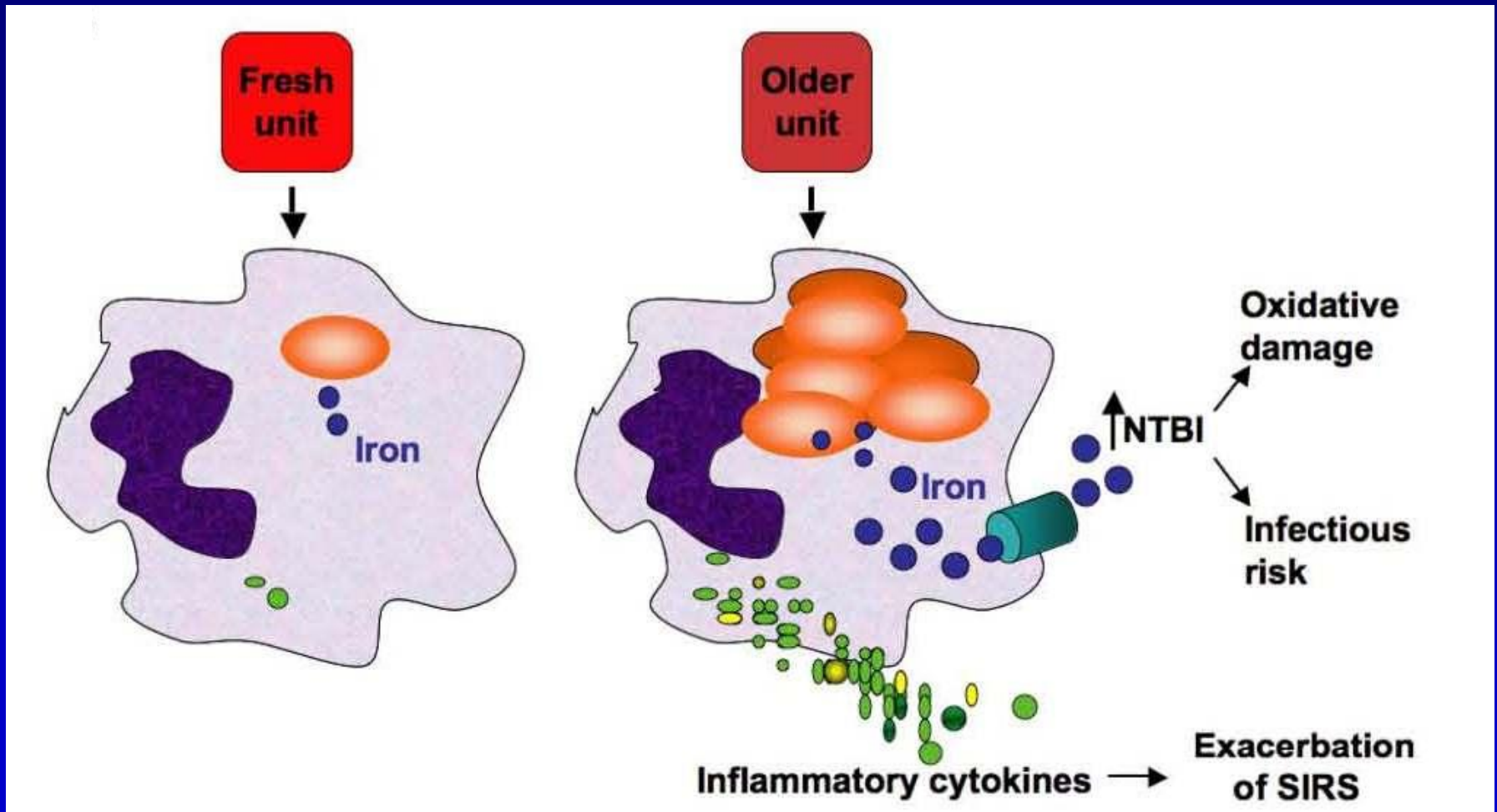
clinically significant change

# Red Cell Surface Changes During Storage



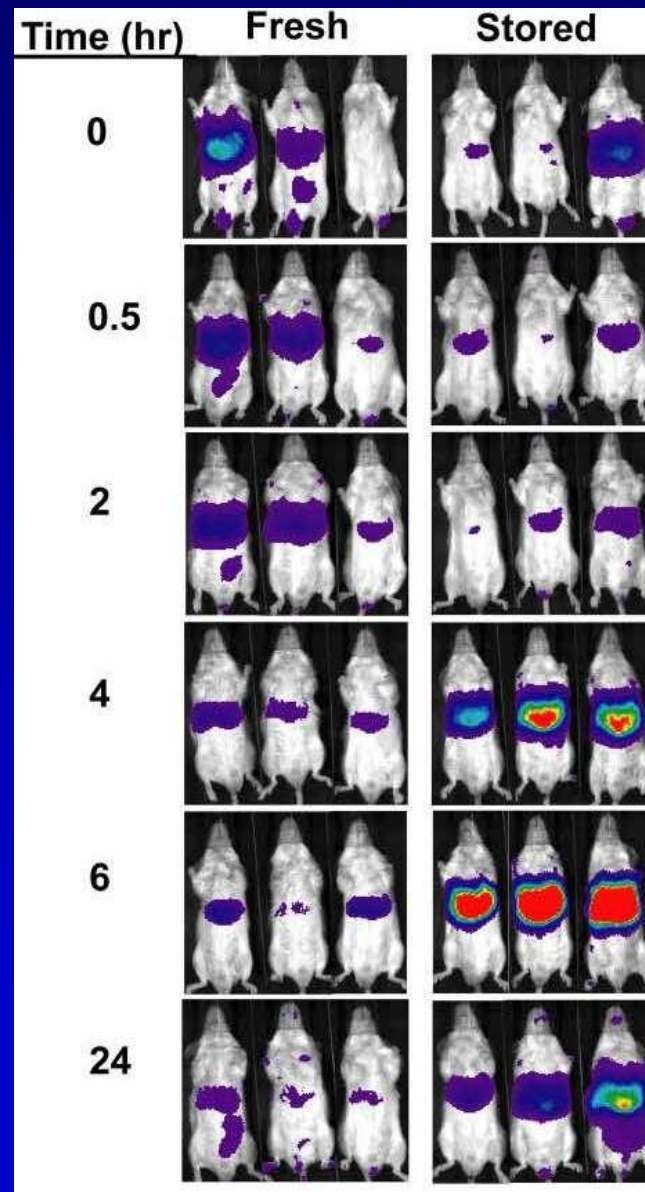
**SECONDARY EFFECTS?**

# The “Iron Hypothesis”





# ***Result: Inflammatory Response Induction***

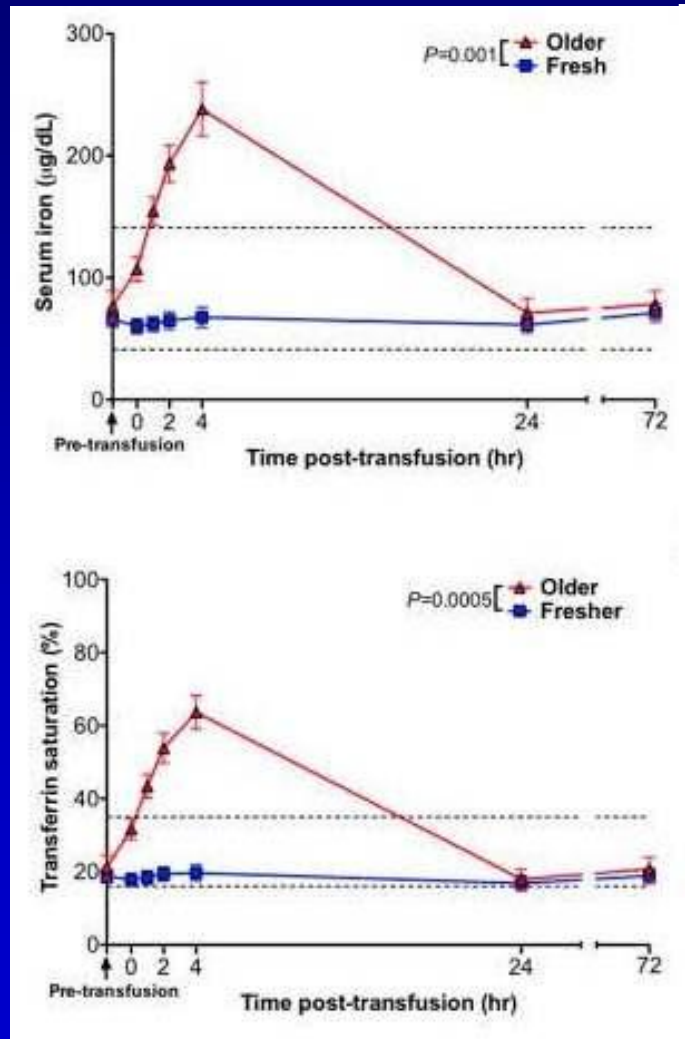


**Seen with:**  
**Washed RBCs**

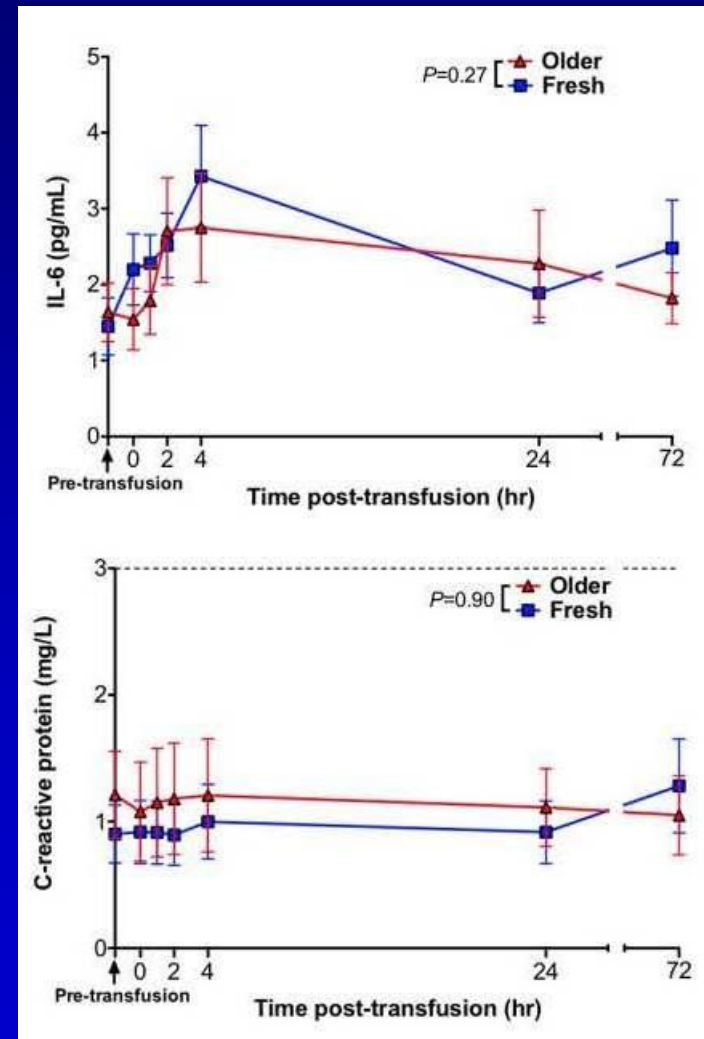
**Not seen with:**  
**RBC ghosts**  
**Supernate**  
**Stroma-free lysate**

# Human Response

## *Different – or inadequate challenge?*



n = 14      Storage: 3-7 vs 40-42 d  
Txn: 1 autologous unit



Hod EA et al. *Blood* 2011;118:6675-82.

# Immunologic Effects of Red Cell Storage

T lymphocyte transcriptional response (at 72h) after *autologous* infusion of RBCs stored for 5 weeks:

TLR4:	+9%
TLR5:	+6%
TLR6:	+5%
LRP1:	+12%
AATK:	+3%

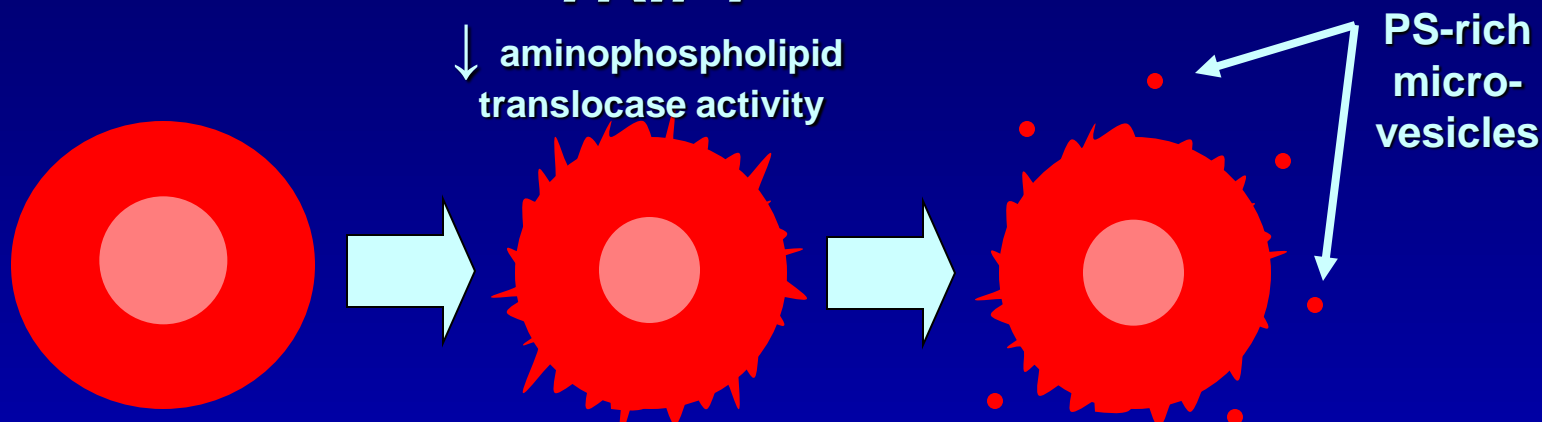
TLR: Toll-like receptor

LPR: Low-density lipoprotein receptor related protein

AATK: Apoptosis-associated tyrosine kinase

# Transfusion-Induced Facilitation of Thrombin

## TRIFT



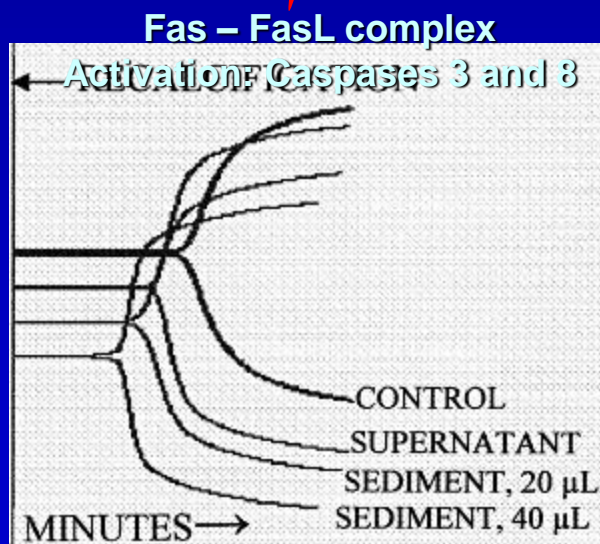
THROMBIN



PAR-1 RECEPTOR  
(DENDRITIC CELLS)



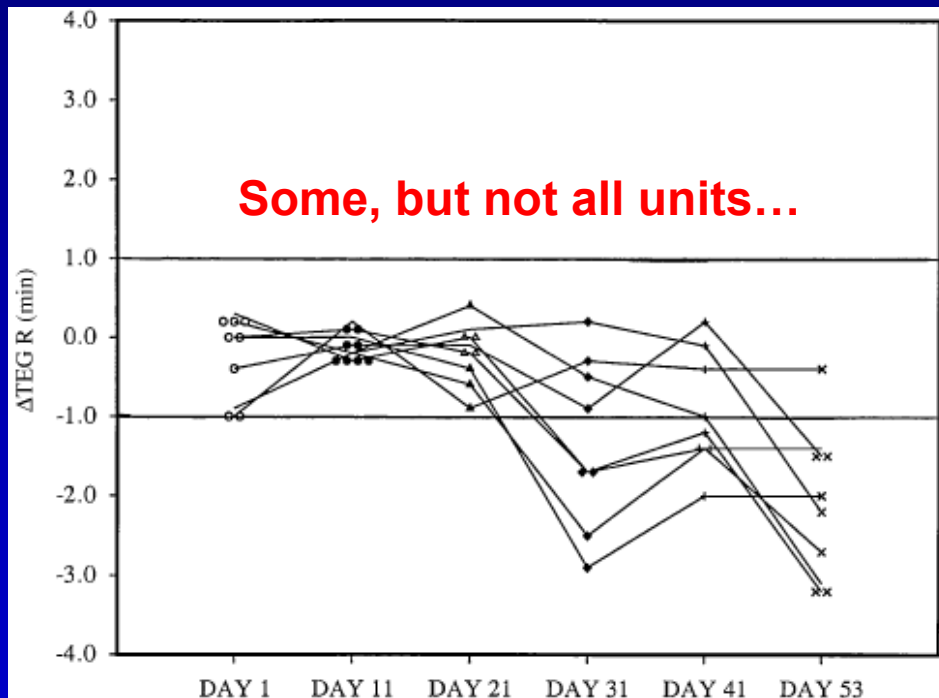
SYSTEMIC  
INFLAMMATORY  
RESPONSE



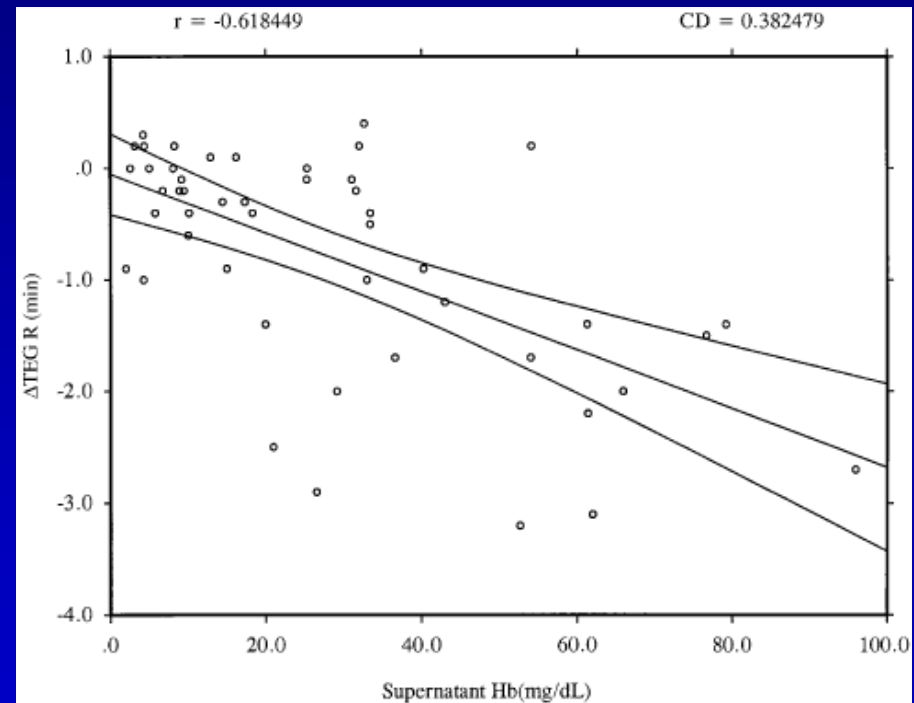
Ratio similar to 1 unit's  
supernatant into adult  
blood volume



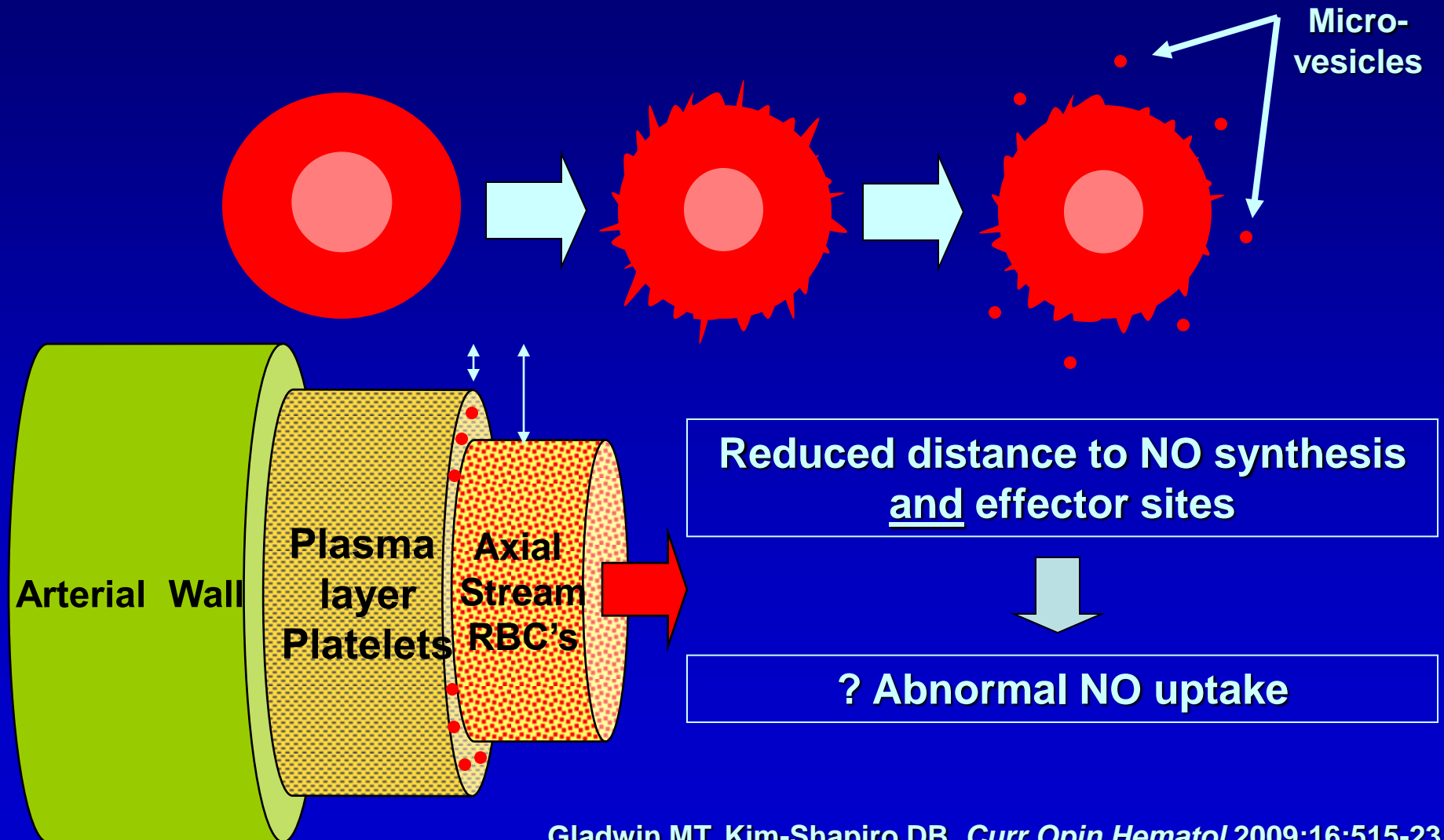
# Transfusion-Induced Facilitation of Thrombin *TRIFT*



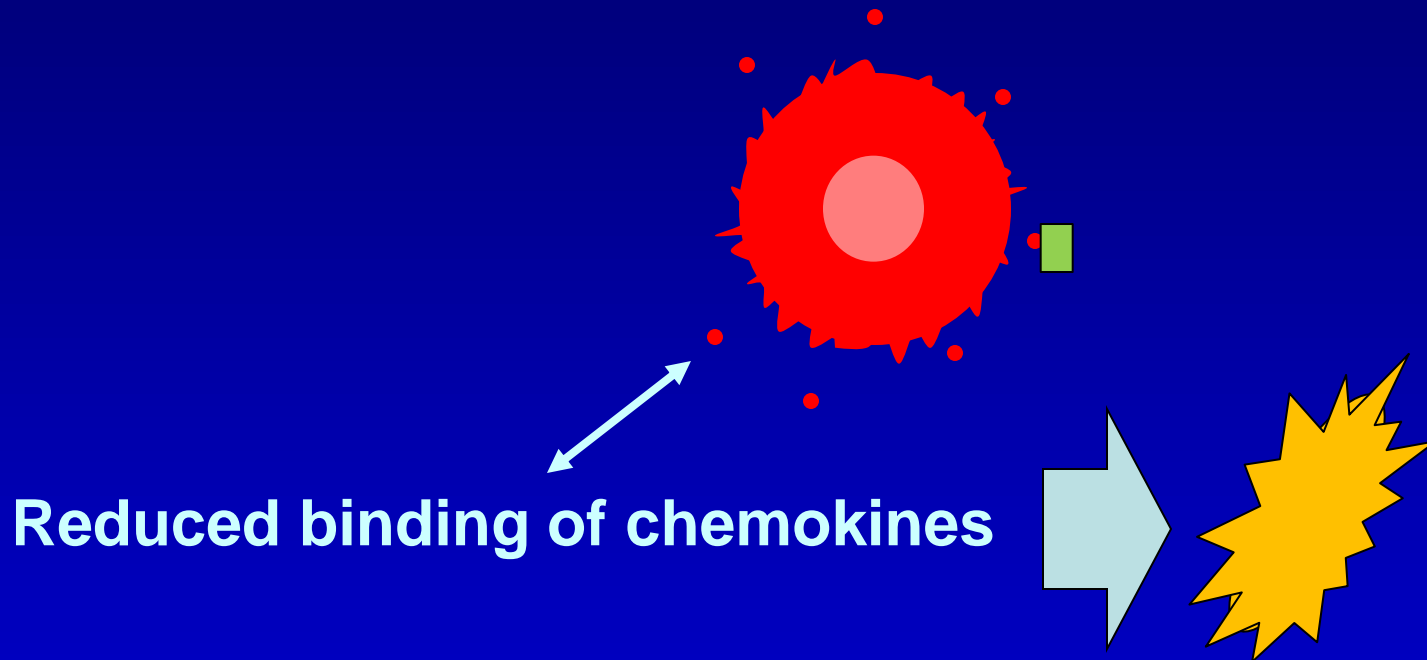
→  
- after 21 days



# Impact of Microvesicles: NO Dysregulation?

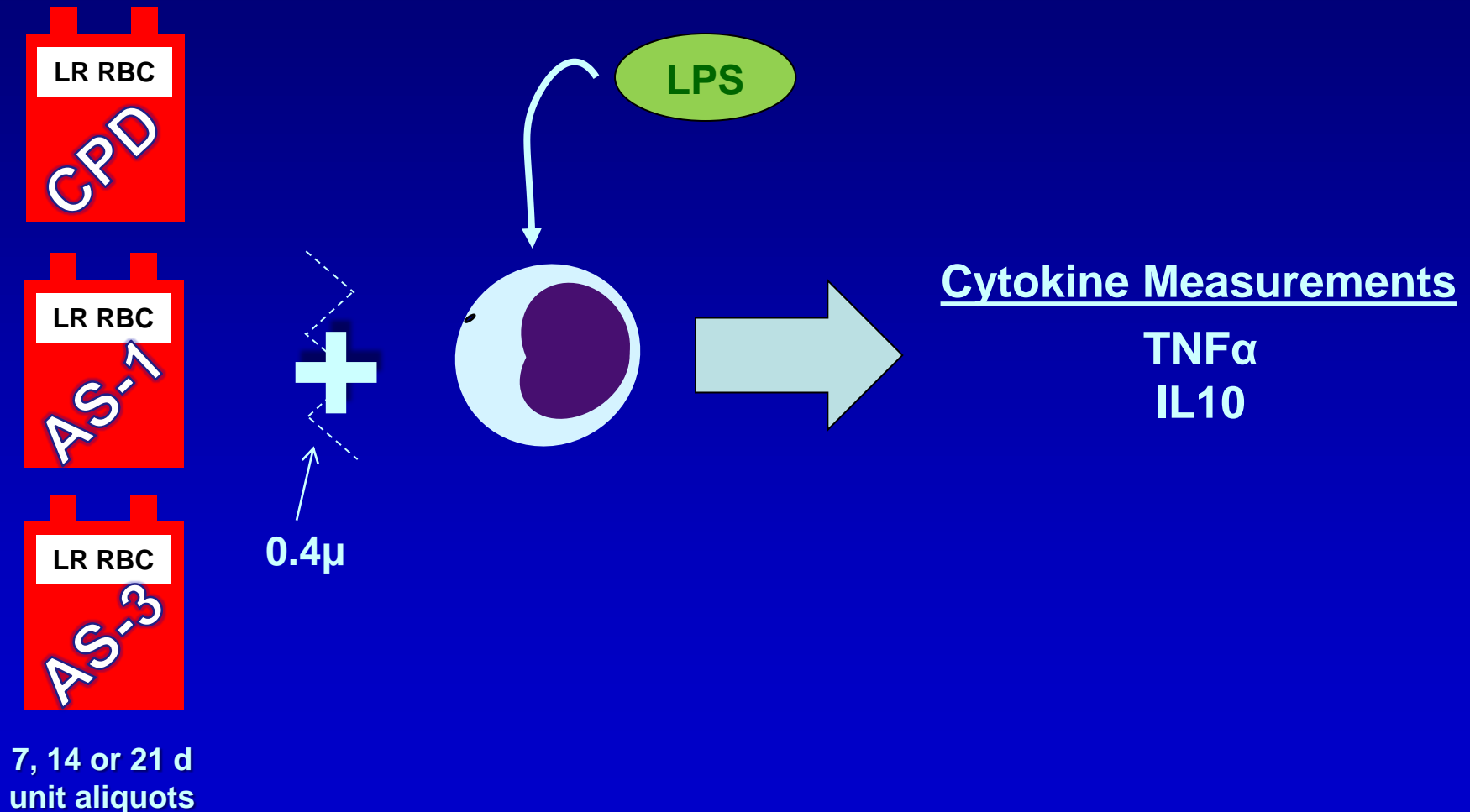


# Impact of Microvesicles: Chemokine Binding



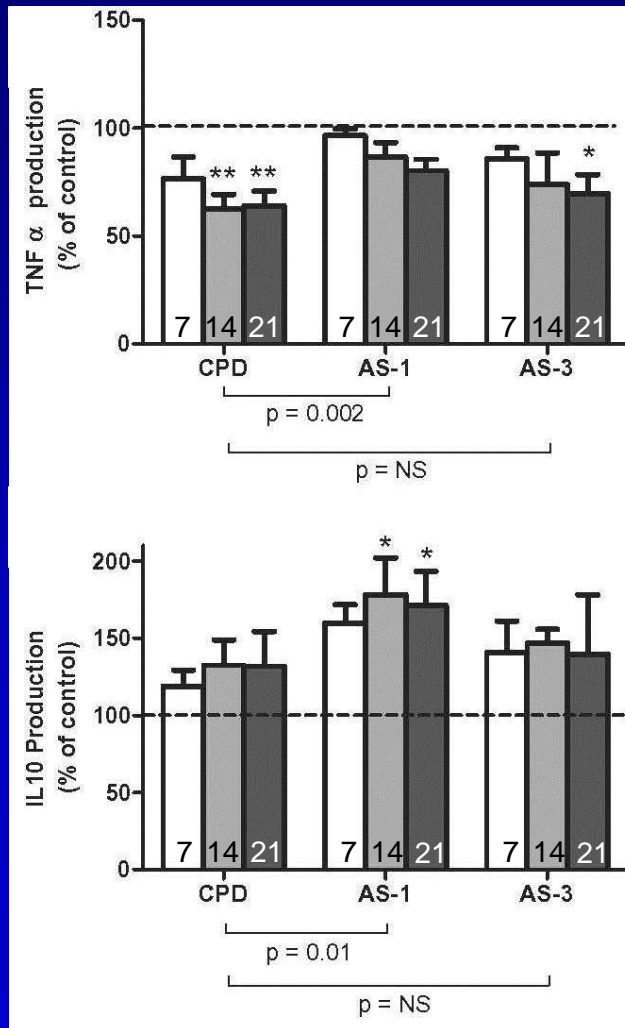
# RBC Storage and Monocytes:

## The Impact of the Storage Environment





# RBC Storage and Monocytes: The Impact of the Storage Environment



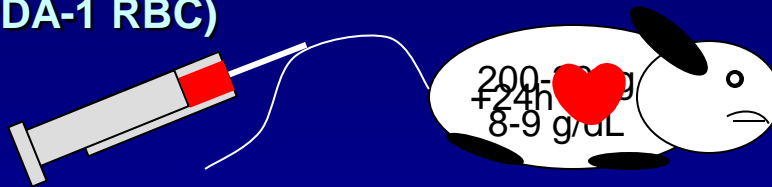
**CONTROLS:**  
No media effect.

**Greater effects with  
longer storage.**

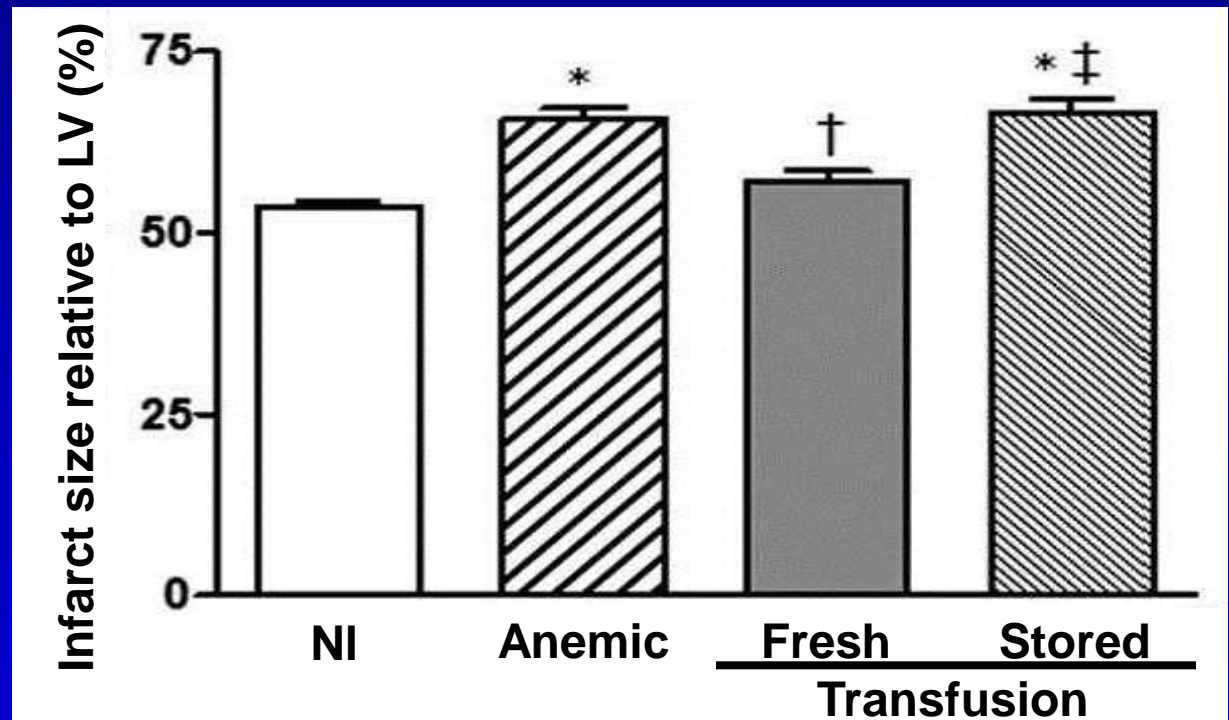
***Same results with cellular barrier:  
Soluble mediator***

# Transfusion after Myocardial Infarction

± Transfusion to 10 g/dL  
(NLR CPDA-1 RBC)

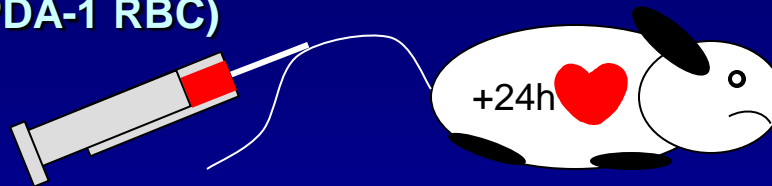


Storage:  
4 hr  
7d ("≈ 29d")

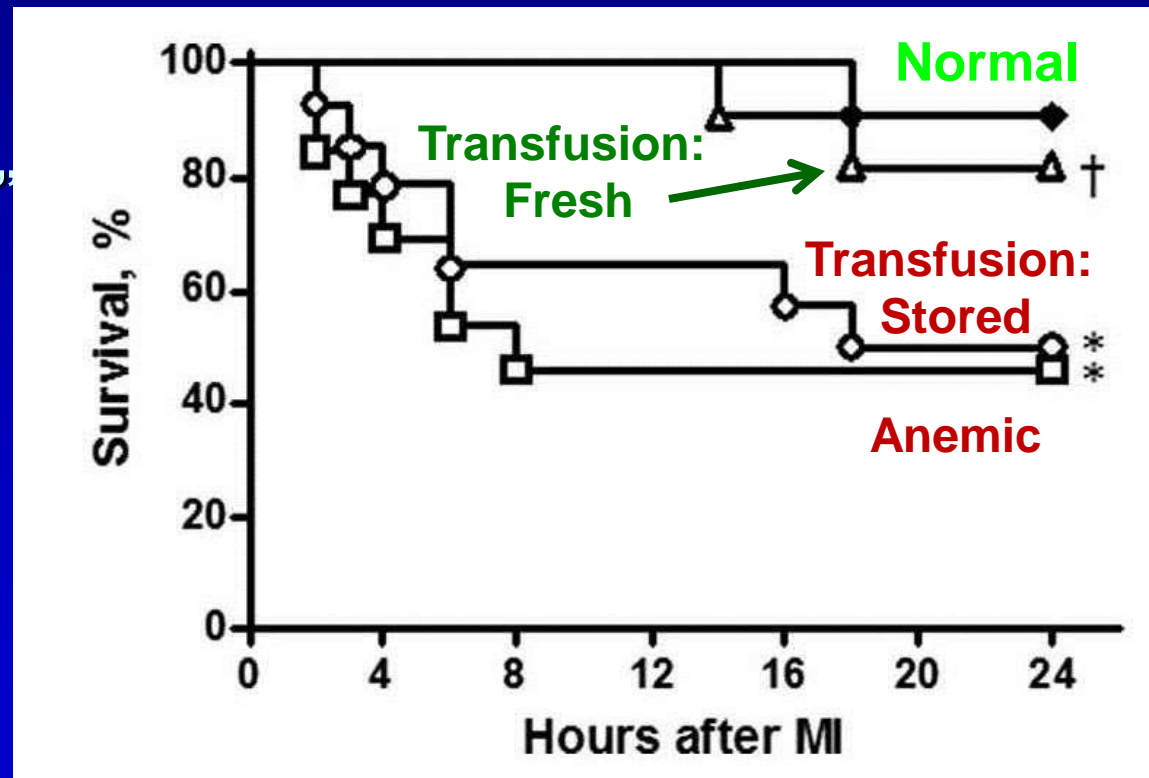


# Transfusion after Myocardial Infarction

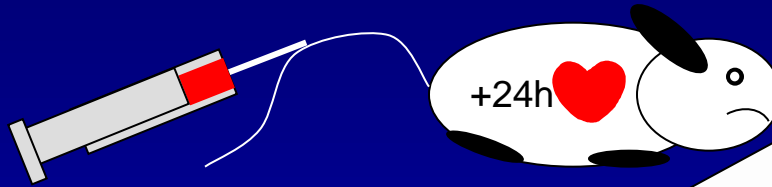
± Transfusion to 10 g/dL  
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Storage:  
4 hr  
7d ("≈ 29d")



# Transfusion after Myocardial Infarction

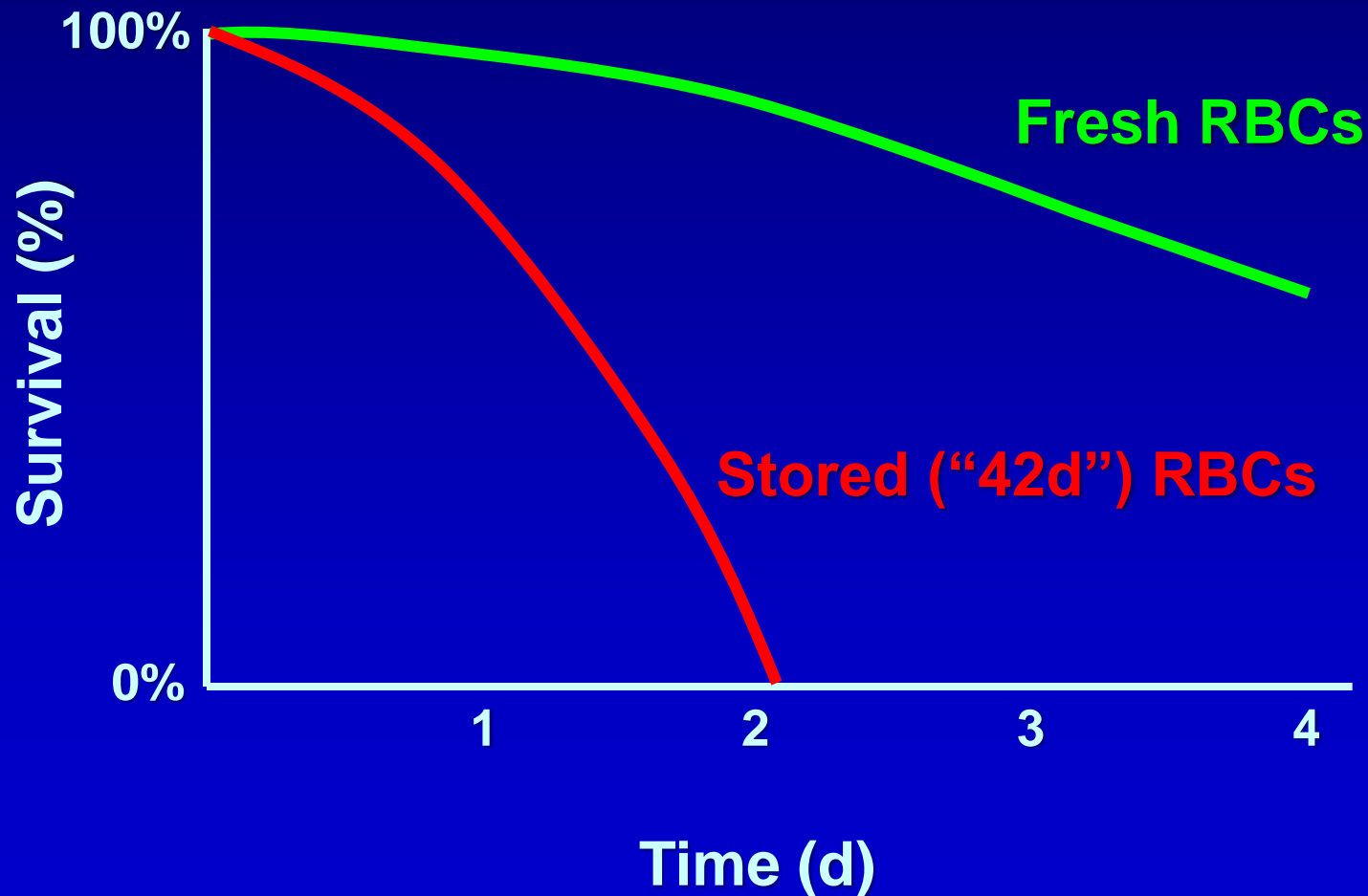


Do you ask your blood banker to transfuse only fresh red blood cells in cardiac patients?

**Note: Differences in rheology, biochemistry, coagulation by species**

# Transfusion after Pneumonia

*Canine Model – Complete Exchange Transfusion*

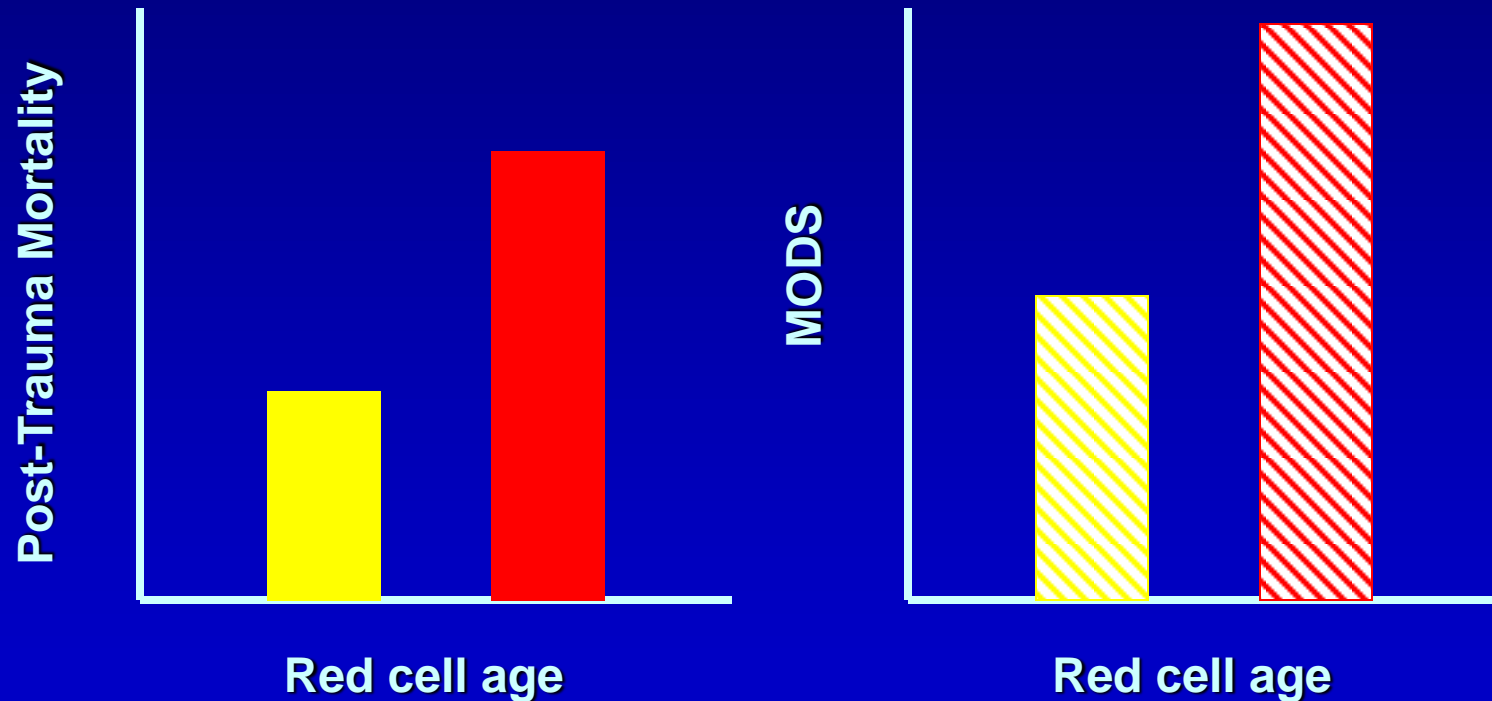


**There are multiple animal models demonstrating worse outcomes with red cell storage.**

**Do we see this with (human) clinical care?**



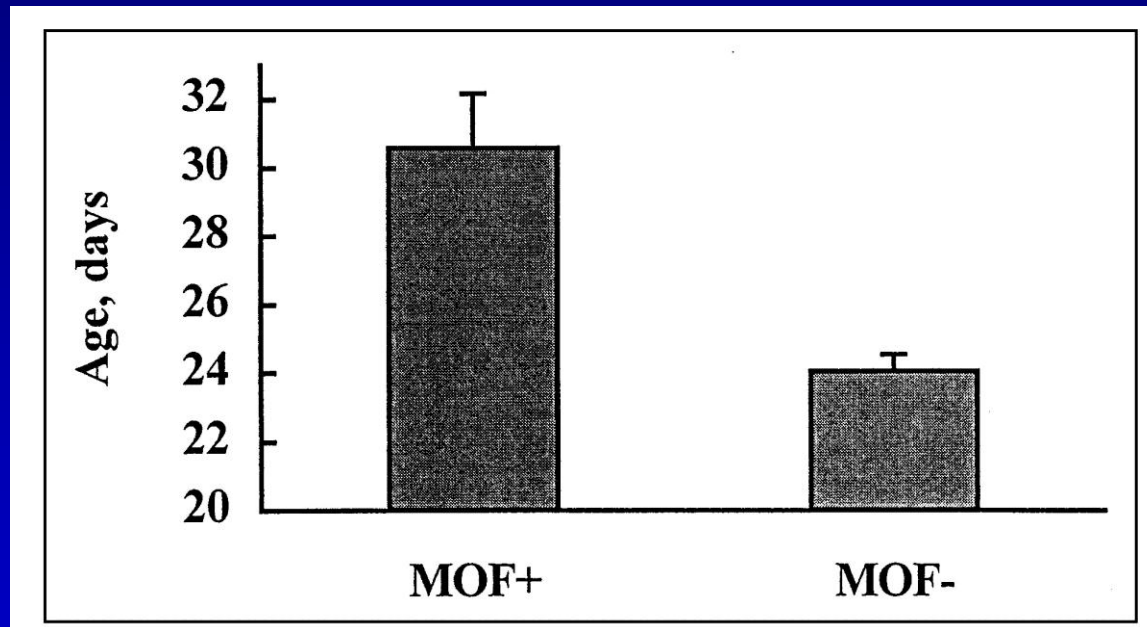
# Are Old Red Cell Units Dangerous?



*Retrospective Analyses*

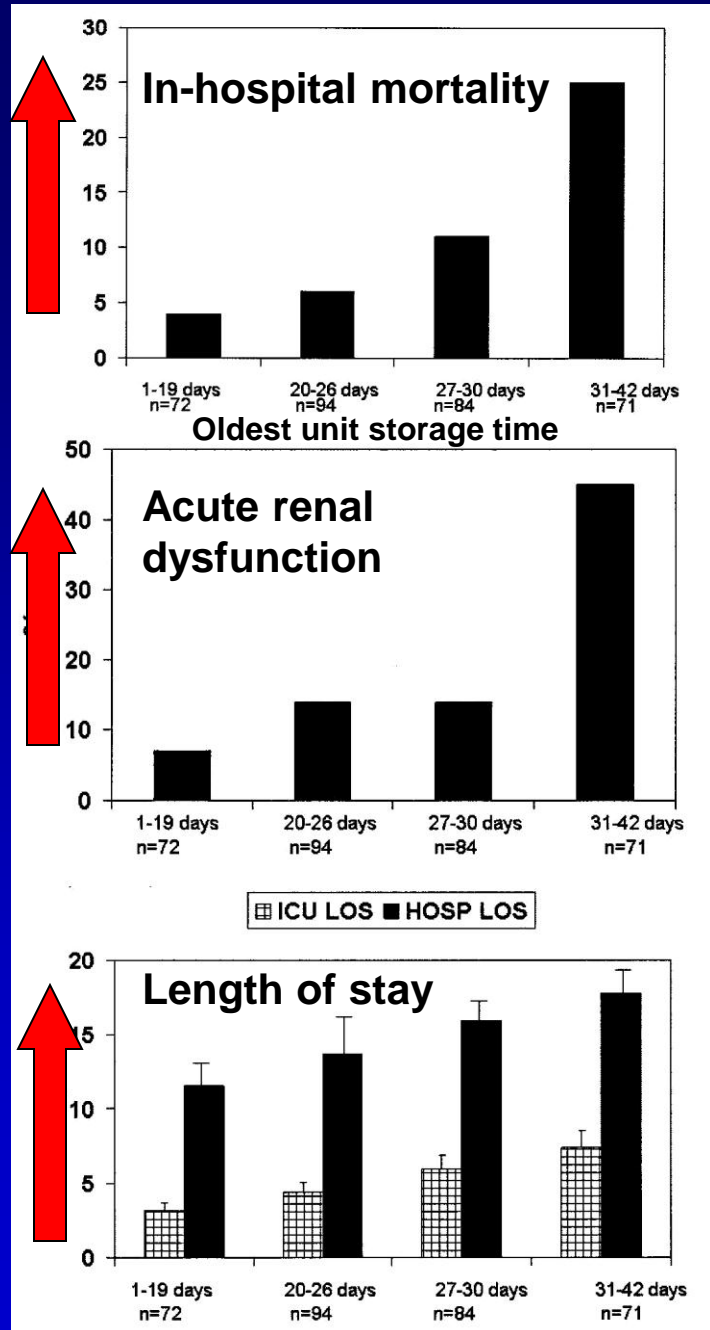
# RBC Storage and MOF

## *A cohort analysis in trauma*



# RBC Storage in CABG Patients

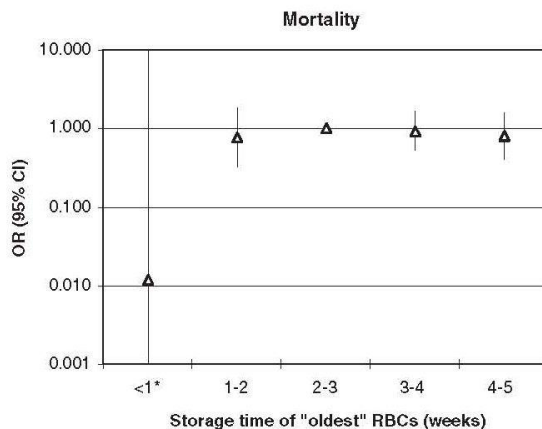
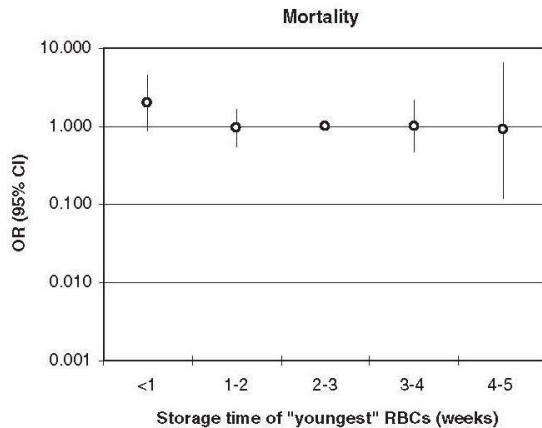
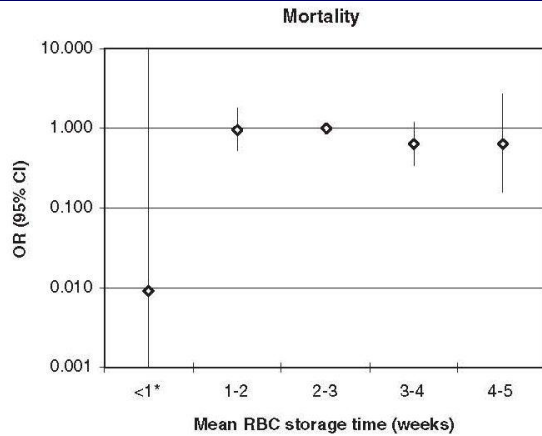
n=321



Confounding variables accounted for:

- FFP, platelet transfusions
- Number of RBCs transfused
- Gender
- NYHA class
- Diabetes
- LV EF
- COPD
- HTN
- Hct
- Cr
- Procedure, times
- Post-op inotropes

# RBC Storage in CABG Patients n=2732



**No correlation between RBC storage time and**

- Mortality
- ICU LOS

**Note: LR AS RBCs**

# RBC Storage in CABG Patients

Risk of pneumonia increased 1% per day of RBC storage

Twenty factors correlated with LOS; transfusion still an independent predictor of LOS: 0.84% ↑ per unit.

## FACTOR

## VARIANCE

**Are there other factors explained accounted for**

**EXPLAINED**

**that correlate with transfusion and are more important?**

Intubation	33%
Impaired consciousness	25%
Wound drainage	17%
Chest tube drainage > 1300 mL	17%
Age > 74 y	12%
Repeat surgery	10%
Other cardiac procedure	8%
Bypass > 135 min	8%
Female gender	5%
Single IM bypass	4%


Vamvakas EC, Carven JH. *Transfusion* 1999;39:701-10.

Vamvakas EC, Carven JH. *Transfusion* 2000;40:101-9.

# RBC Storage in Cardiac Surgery Patients

*Retrospective analysis of 6002 patients*

Storage time:	<u>≤14d</u>	<u>&gt;14d</u>
In-hospital mortality	1.7%	2.8%
Intubation > 72h	9.7%	5.6%
Renal dysfunction	1.6%	2.7%
1yr mortality	7.4%	11.0%



**Differences in:**

**ABO group distribution**  
**ABO group usage (> distribution)**  
**LV dysfunction**  
**Mitral regurgitation; prior MI**  
**Body size**  
**NYHA class**  
**Peripheral vascular disease**



# Patient Groups

**Table 1.** Characteristics of Transfused Blood and Demographic and Clinical Features of the Patients.\*

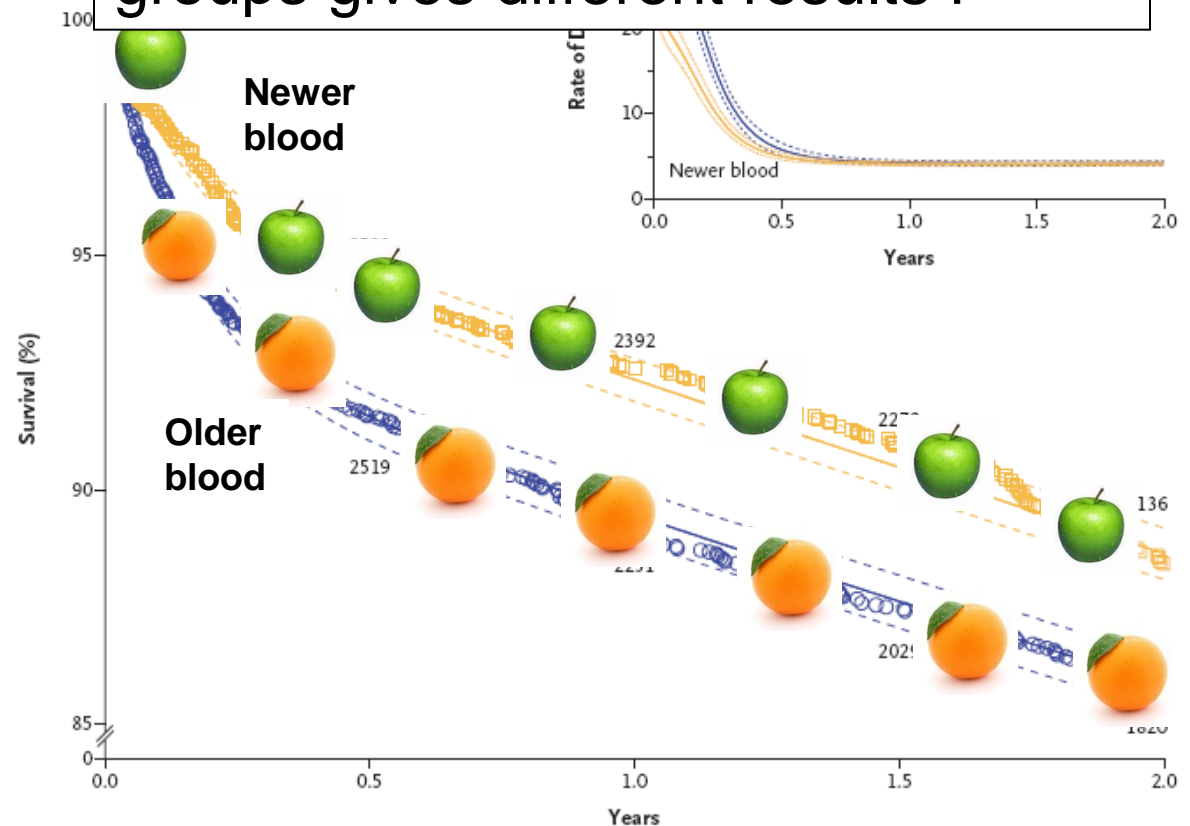
Variable	Patients Receiving Newer Blood (N=2172)†	Patients Receiving Older Blood (N=3130)‡	P Value
Transfused blood			
Duration of storage—days			
Median	11	20	
Interquartile range	9–3	17–25	
No. of red-cell units per patient			0.99
Median	2	2	
Interquartile range	2–4	2–4	
Blood group—no. of units/total no. of units (%)			<0.001
A	3340/8802 (37.9)	6116/10,782 (56.7)	
B	778/8802 (8.8)	1291/10,782 (12.0)	
O	4674/8802 (53.1)	3349/10,782 (31.1)	
AB	10/8802 (0.1)	26/10,782 (0.2)	
Leukocyte reduction—no. of patients (%)			<0.001
Yes	1087 (36.1)	1723 (55.0)	
No	1724 (60.0)	1050 (33.5)	
Mixed	111 (3.9)	357 (11.4)	
Fresh frozen plasma—no. of patients (%)	301 (10.5)	335 (10.7)	0.78
Platelets—no. of patients (%)	454 (15.8)	509 (16.3)	0.63
Demographic features			
Race—no. of patients (%)§			0.09
White	2421 (84.3)	2700 (86.3)	
Black	189 (6.6)	188 (6.0)	
Other	262 (9.1)	242 (7.7)	
Age—yr			0.05
Median	69	70	
Interquartile range	60–76	61–77	
Female sex—no. of patients (%)	1208 (42.1)	1311 (41.9)	0.89
Body-surface area—m <sup>2</sup>			0.03
Median	1.93	1.94	
Interquartile range	1.75–2.09	1.77–2.10	
Blood group—no. of patients/total no. of patients (%)			<0.001
A	992/2860 (34.7)	1542/3120 (49.4)	
B	308/2860 (10.6)	449/3120 (14.4)	
O	1456/2860 (50.9)	949/3120 (30.4)	
AB	109/2860 (3.8)	180/3120 (5.8)	
Clinical features			
Preoperative laboratory values			
Hematocrit—%			0.41
Median	38.2	38.0	
Interquartile range	34.4–41.1	34.3–41.0	
Creatinine—mg/dl			0.12
Median	1.0	1.0	
Interquartile range	0.8–1.3	0.8–1.3	

**Table 1.** (Continued.)

Variable		Patients Receiving Older Blood (N=3130)‡	P Value
Bilirubin—mg/dl			
Median		0.6	0.81
Interquartile range		0.4–0.8	
Cardiovascular features			
Abnormal preoperative electrocardiogram		1975 (63.1)	<0.001
Heart failure		1469 (46.9)	0.15
NYHA class			<0.001
I		370 (11.8)	
II	1474 (51.3)	1622 (51.8)	
III	700 (24.4)	827 (26.4)	
IV	382 (13.3)	311 (9.9)	
Prior myocardial infarction—no. of patients (%)	1502 (52.3)	1564 (50.0)	0.07
Aortic regurgitation—no. of patients (%)	1102 (38.4)	1157 (37.0)	
Mitral regurgitation—no. of patients (%)	1842 (64.1)	2105 (67.3)	0.01
>70% Stenosis of left main trunk—no. of patients (%)¶	353 (12.7)	367 (12.2)	0.55
Clinical presentation—no. of patients (%)			
Preoperative IABP	63 (2.2)	68 (2.2)	0.96
Emergency surgery	37 (1.3)	48 (1.5)	0.42
Coexisting conditions			
Hypertension—no. of patients (%)	2135 (75.3)	2402 (77.1)	0.11
COPD—no. of patients (%)	345 (12.0)	391 (12.5)	0.57
Smoking—no. of patients (%)	1649 (57.4)	1751 (55.9)	0.25
Diabetes—no. of patients (%)**	843 (29.5)	968 (31.1)	0.10
Stroke—no. of patients (%)	307 (10.7)	376 (12.0)	0.11
Peripheral vascular disease—no. of patients (%)	1563 (54.4)	1830 (58.5)	0.002
Intraoperative factors			
Cardiopulmonary-bypass time—min			0.55
Median	101	100	
Interquartile range	80–126	78–127	
Aortic-clamp time—min			0.98
Median	78	78	
Interquartile range	62–97	60–98	
Reoperation—no. of patients (%)	916 (31.9)	1040 (33.2)	0.27
Operative procedure—no. of patients (%)			
Isolated CABG	1251 (43.6)	1336 (42.7)	0.49
Isolated valve replacement	754 (26.3)	844 (27.0)	0.53
Use of internal thoracic artery as bypass conduit	1407 (49.0)	1552 (49.6)	0.65

**Blood is not issued randomly!**

# Comparison of very different patient groups gives different results !



**Figure 3. Kaplan–Meier Estimates of Survival and Death.**

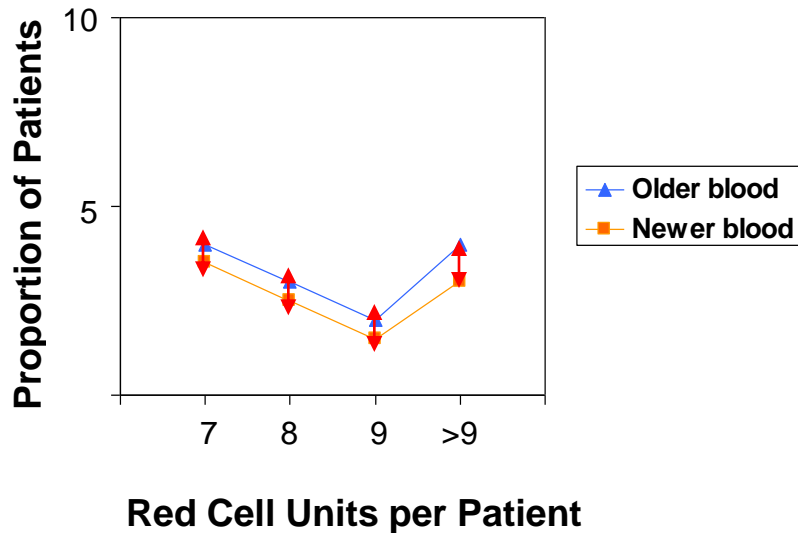
The curves show data from 2872 patients who were given exclusively newer blood (stored for 14 days or less) and 3130 patients given exclusively older blood (stored for more than 14 days). The numbers above and below the curves represent the numbers of patients who were alive and under follow-up observation in each group at that time. The solid lines of the same color represent estimated survival or the rate of death, and the dotted lines represent pointwise 95% confidence intervals. The nonparametric survival estimator (orange squares or blue circles), as determined by the Kaplan–Meier method, is superimposed on the parametric survival function estimator. In this un-adjusted comparison, the percentage of patients receiving older blood who survived was lower than the percentage of those receiving newer blood who survived, especially during the initial follow-up period.

Data **un-adjusted** for differences in patient groups shown in Table 1 !

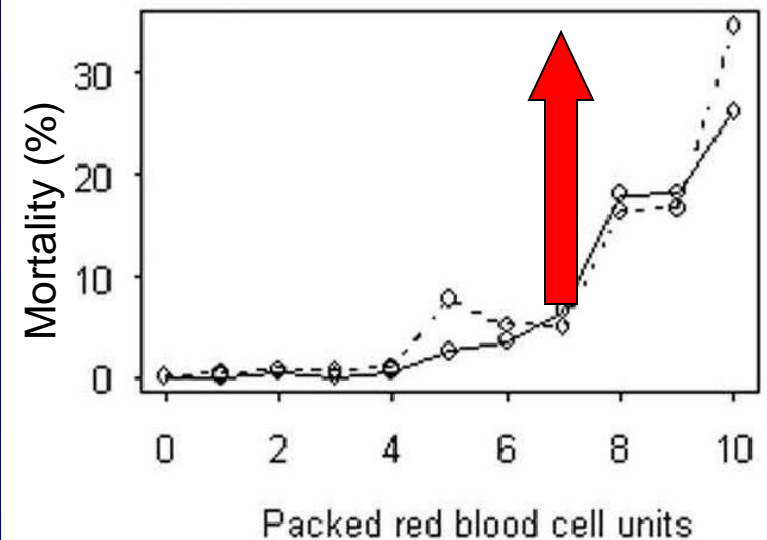
Koch CG *et al.*  
*NEJM* 2008;358:1229-39.  
 as modified by Sunny Dzik

# RBC Storage in Cardiac Surgery Patients

*Is there really a difference?*

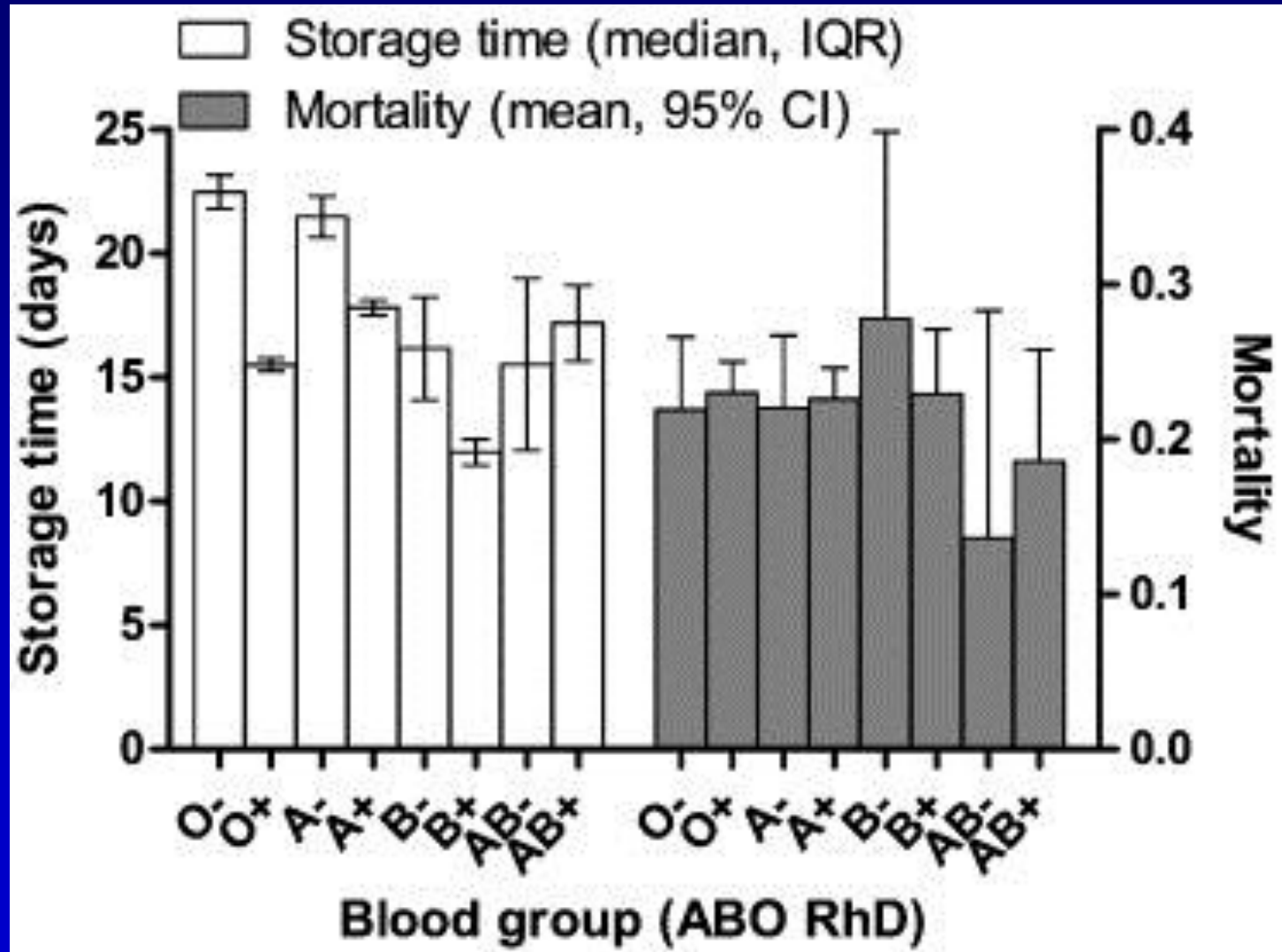


Koch CG et al. *NEJM* 2008;358:1229-39.



Koch CG et al. *Crit Care Med* 2006;34:1608-16.

# Yes, blood group and type do matter!



# RBC Storage in Cardiac Surgery Patients

*Is there really a difference?*

**Population: 670 first-time CABG patients;  $\geq 2$ u in 48h**

80% power to detect a LOS difference  $\geq 5$ d

## Outcomes

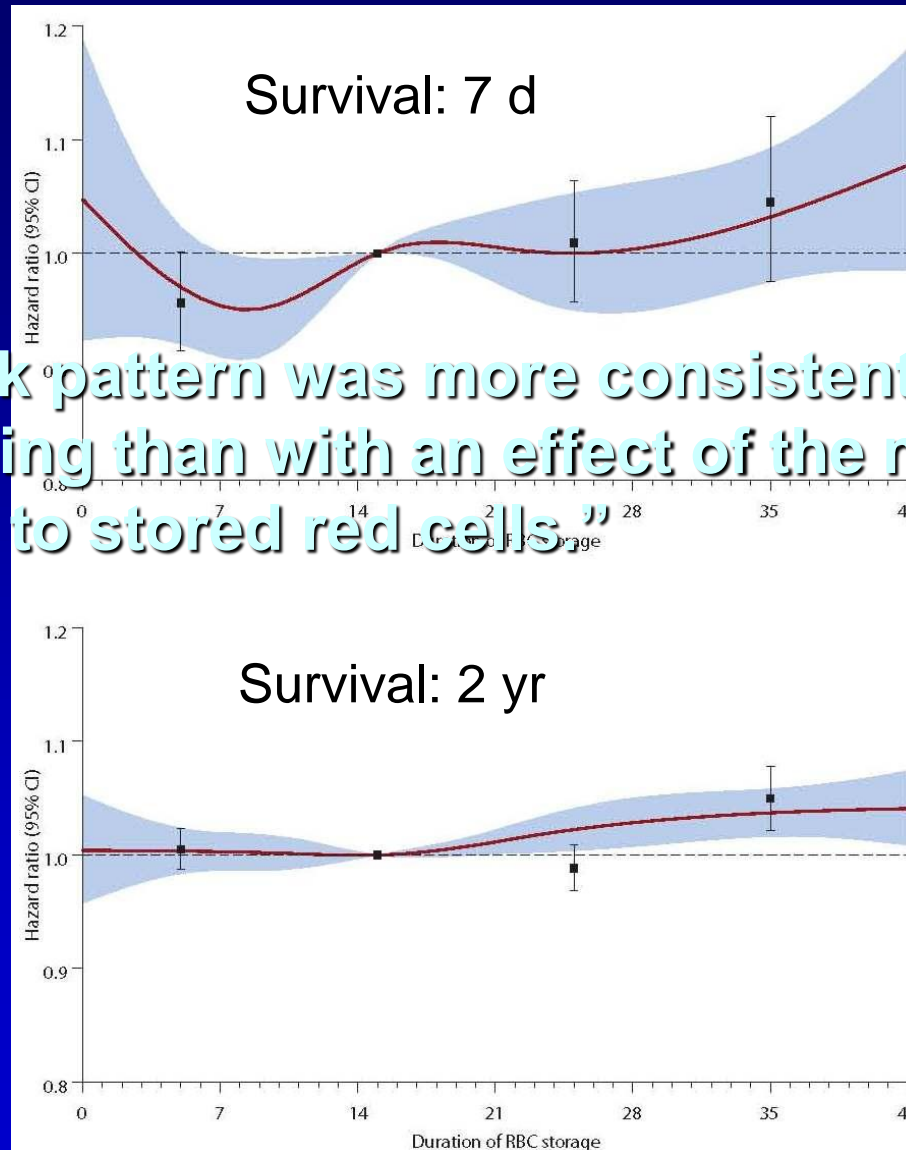
Post-op mortality  
New renal failure  
Pneumonia  
ICU LOS  
Ventilation time

**No effect** of storage time  
oldest unit age  
units  $> 30$ d old

*after adjustment for operative risk  
and volume transfused*

# Scandinavian Observational Study

“...the risk pattern was more consistent with weak confounding than with an effect of the momentary exposure to stored red cells.”





# RBC Storage - Critically Ill Children

## Outcomes

Oxygenation  
Ventilation time  
Mortality

**No effect** of storage time  
for singly or multiply patients  
(n = 67)

# **Pitfalls of Retrospective Studies**

## **Assessing the Effect of Storage Time**

**Lack of accounting for association with number of units  
(total; beyond a particular age)**

**Using non-transfused patients as a reference**

**Analyzing a “storage score” (time \* number)**

**Stratifying analysis with open upper end (effect seen only > x units)**

**Analysis based on oldest unit (→ selects high transfusion volume)**

**Failure to account for ABO differences**

**Historic controls**

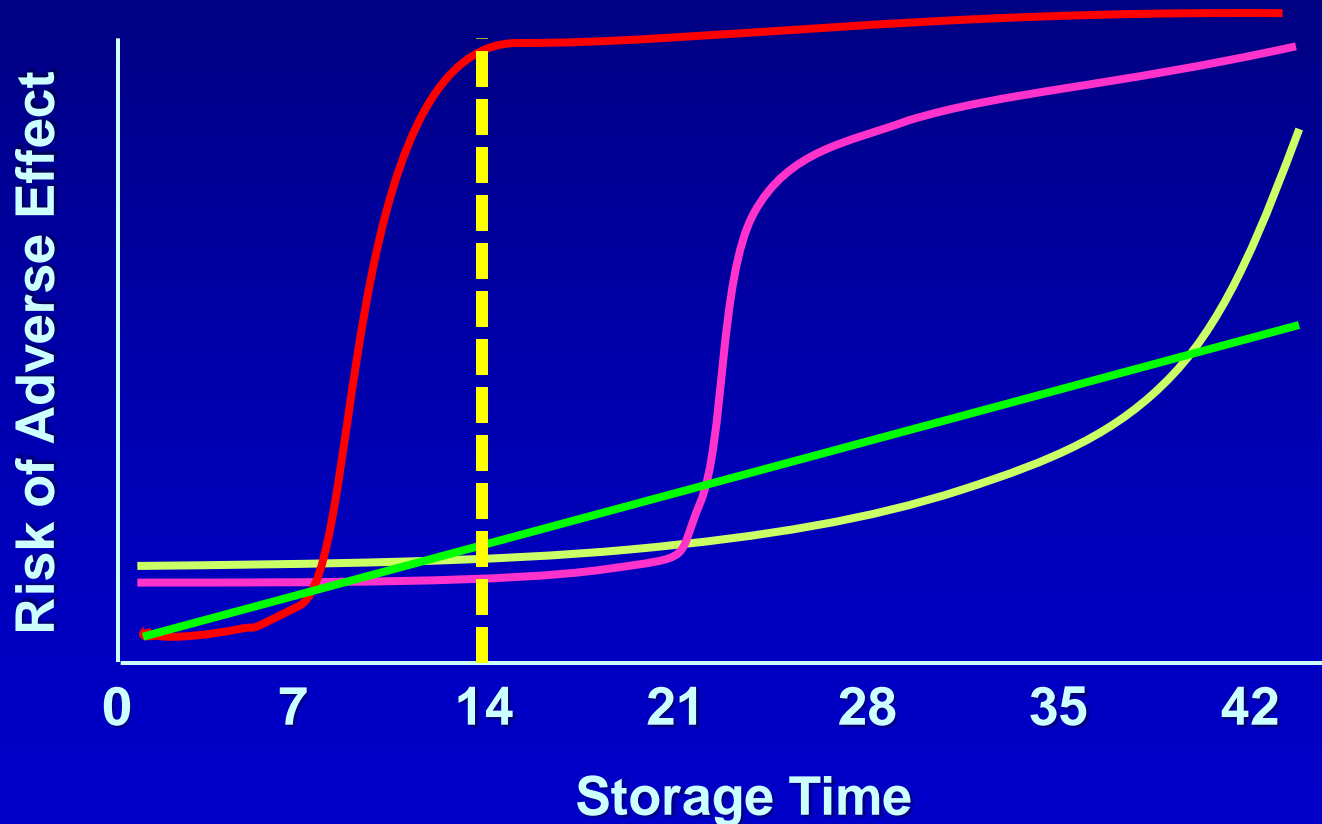
**Failure to correct for co-linearity error**

**Post hoc subgroup analyses**

**Incorrect math!**

# Pitfalls of Retrospective Studies

## Assessing the Effect of Storage Time



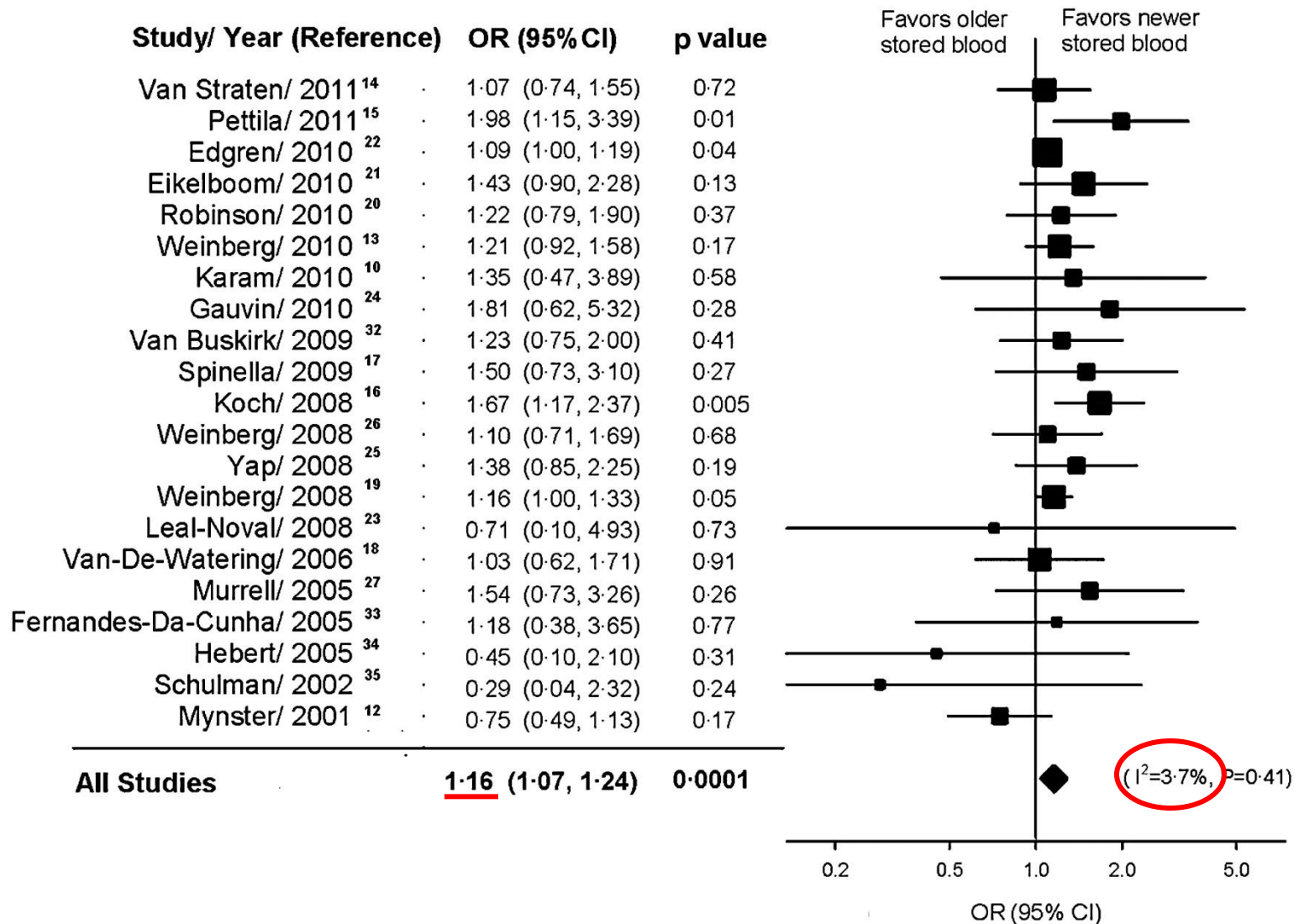
# Pitfalls of Retrospective Studies

## Assessing the Effect of Storage Time

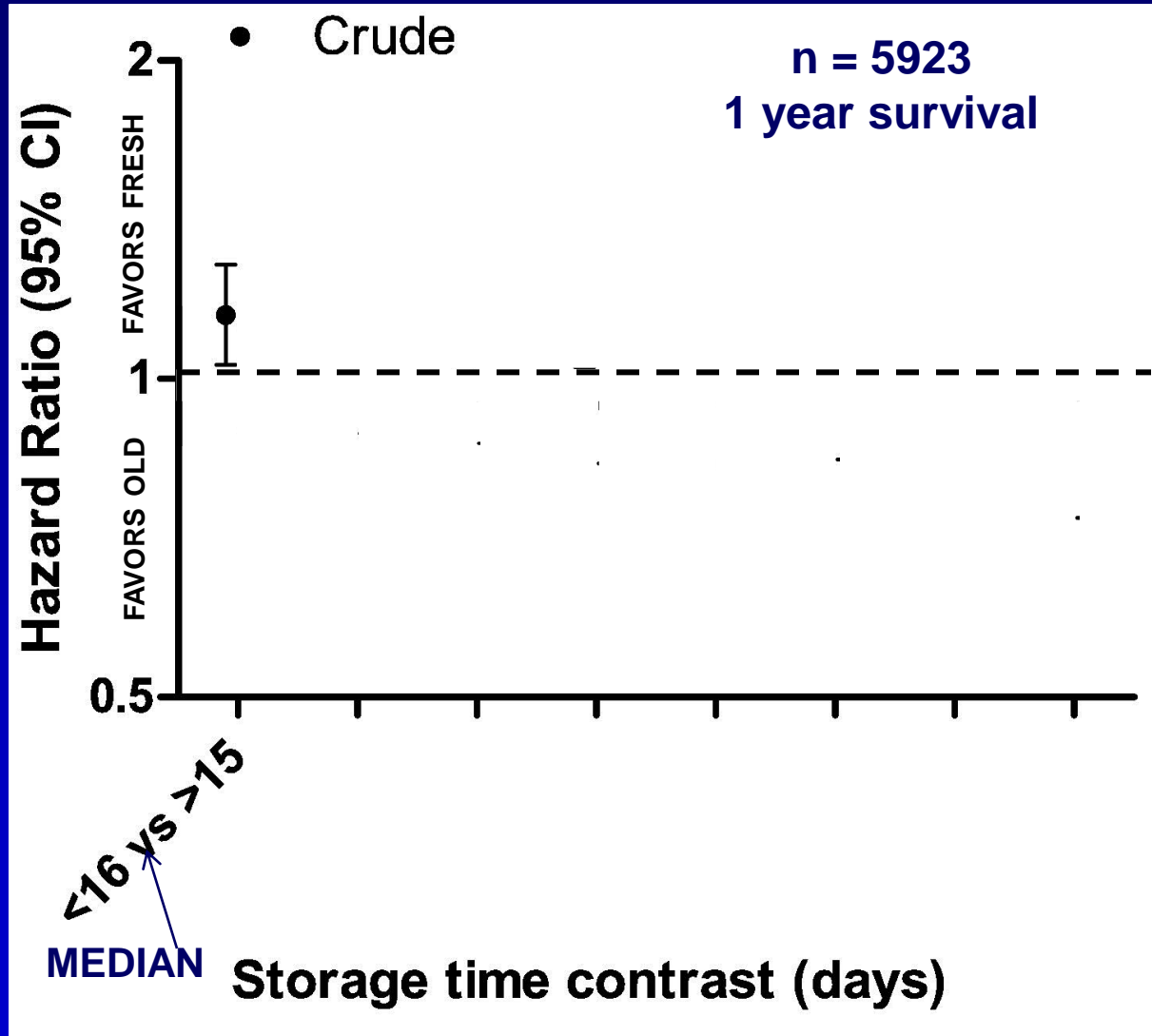
- Lack of accounting for association with number of units  
(total; beyond a particular age)
- Using non-transfused patients as a reference
- Analyzing a “storage score” (time \* number)
- Stratifying analysis with open upper end (effect seen only > x units)
- Analysis based on oldest unit (→ selects high transfusion volume)
- Failure to account for ABO differences
- Historic controls
- Failure to correct for co-linearity error
- Post hoc subgroup analyses
- Incorrect math!

*If you torture data long enough, it will eventually confess!*

# Meta-Analysis: Storage Time and Mortality

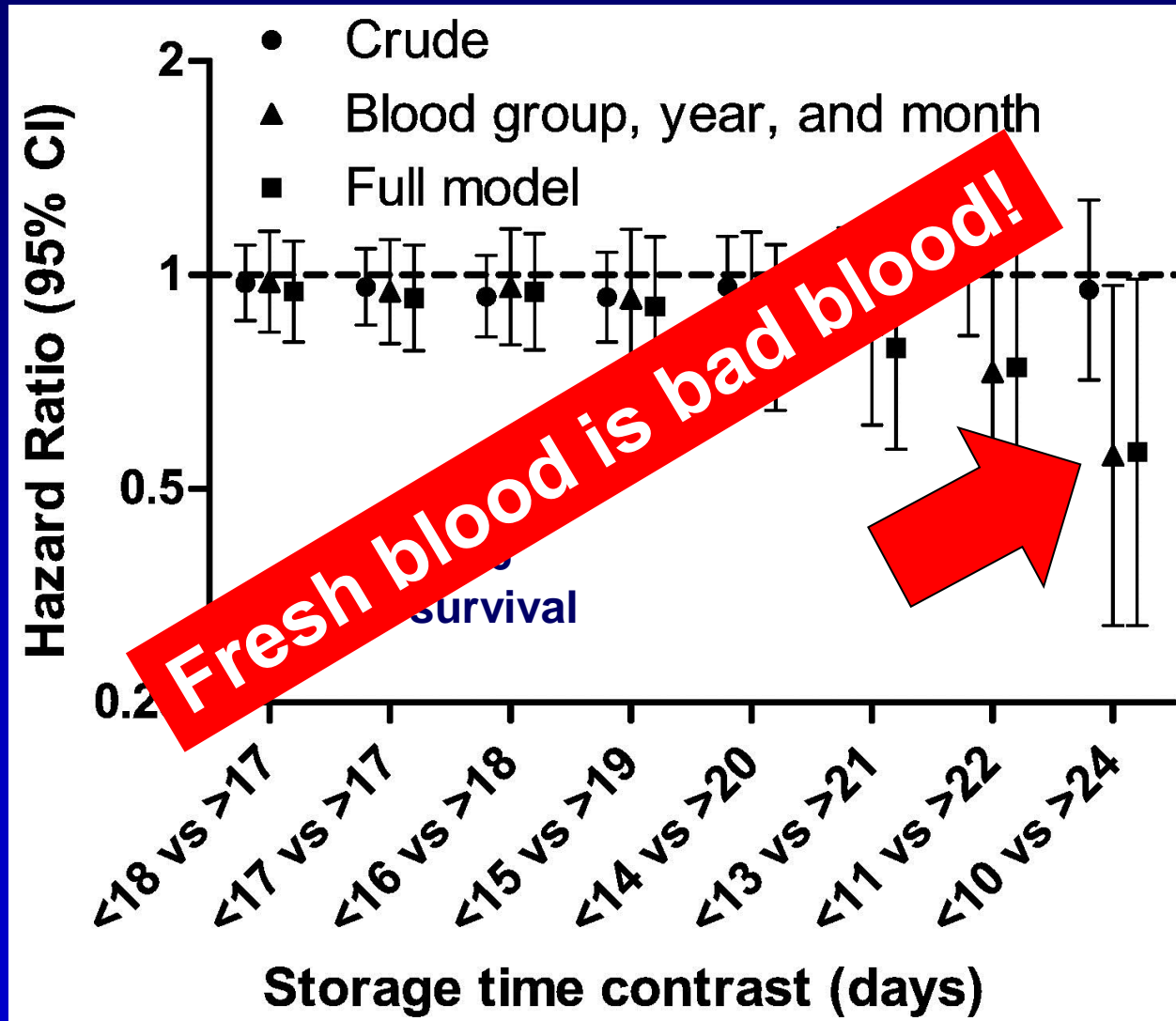


# Transfusion and Survival





# Transfusion and Survival



# Fresh vs. Stored Red Cells

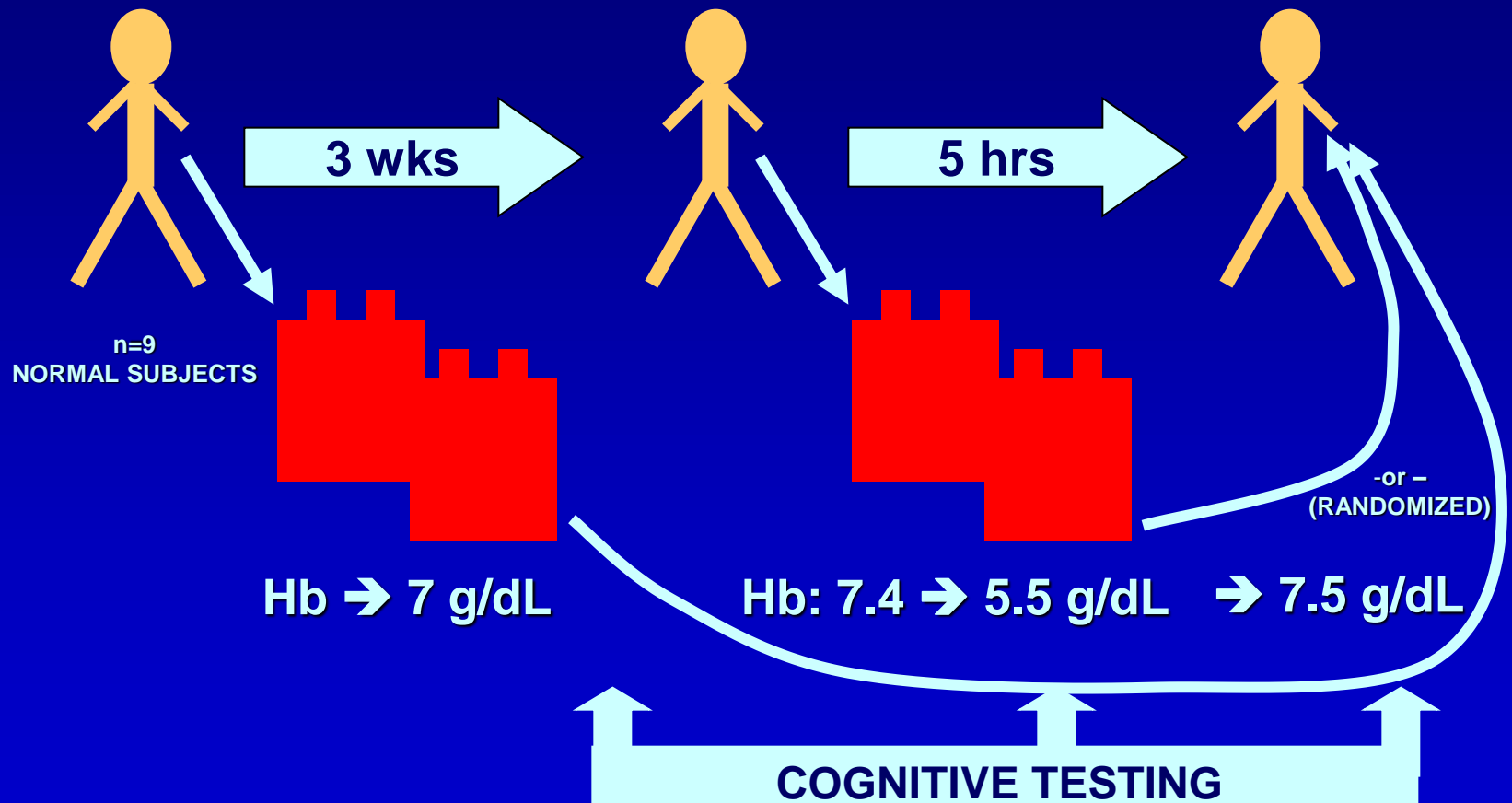
*in critically ill patients*

	<u>Fresh Blood</u> (2d)	<u>Stored Blood</u> (28d)
Gastric-arterial pCO <sub>2</sub>	During transfusion <b>No differences</b> and 5h after	
Gastric intramucosal pH		
Arterial pH		
Arterial lactate		

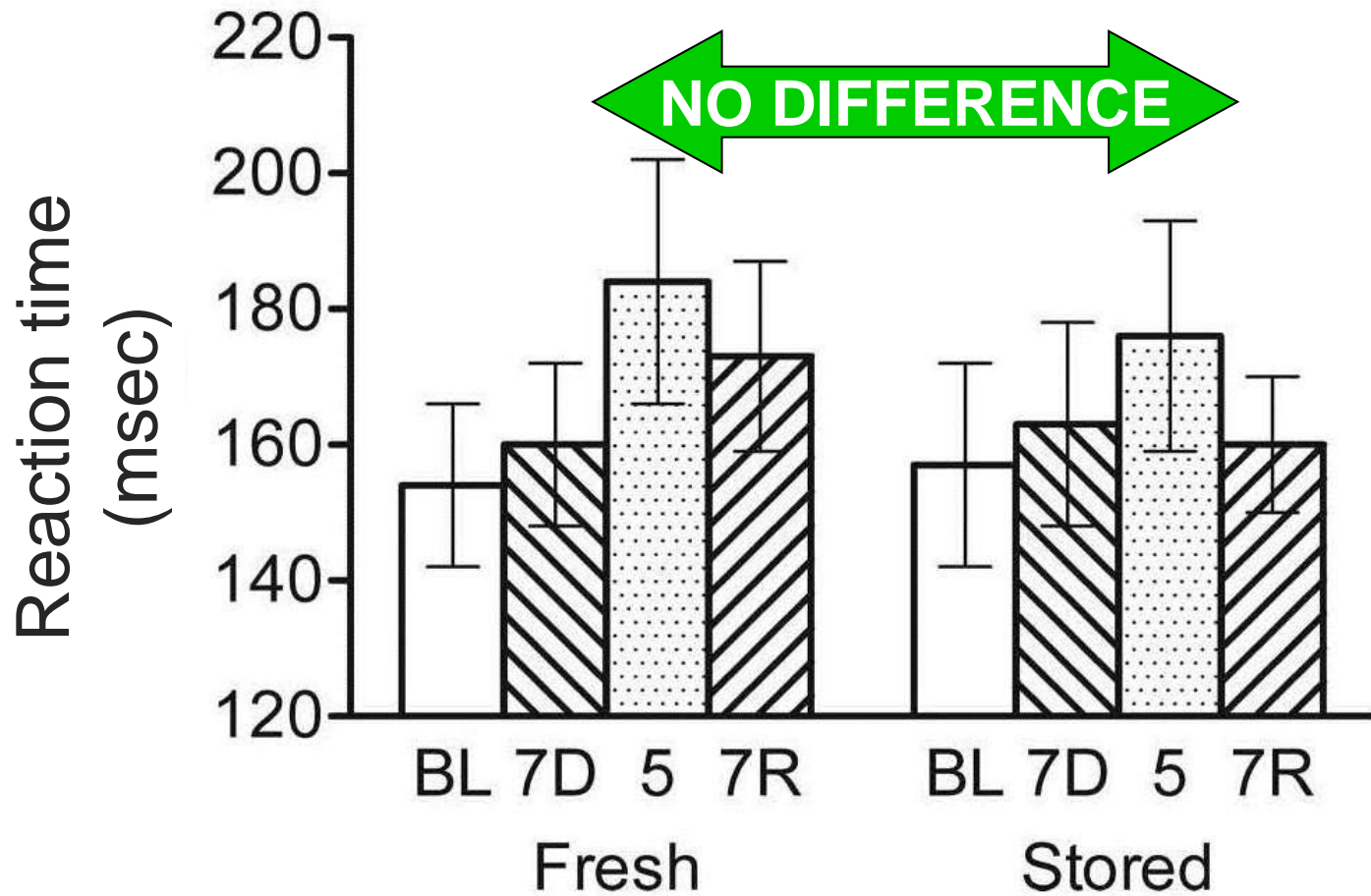
**Our data do not support the hypothesis that transfusing stored red cells adversely affects tissue oxygenation in anemic, euvolemic, critically ill patients with no evidence of bleeding.**

# Fresh vs. Stored Red Cells

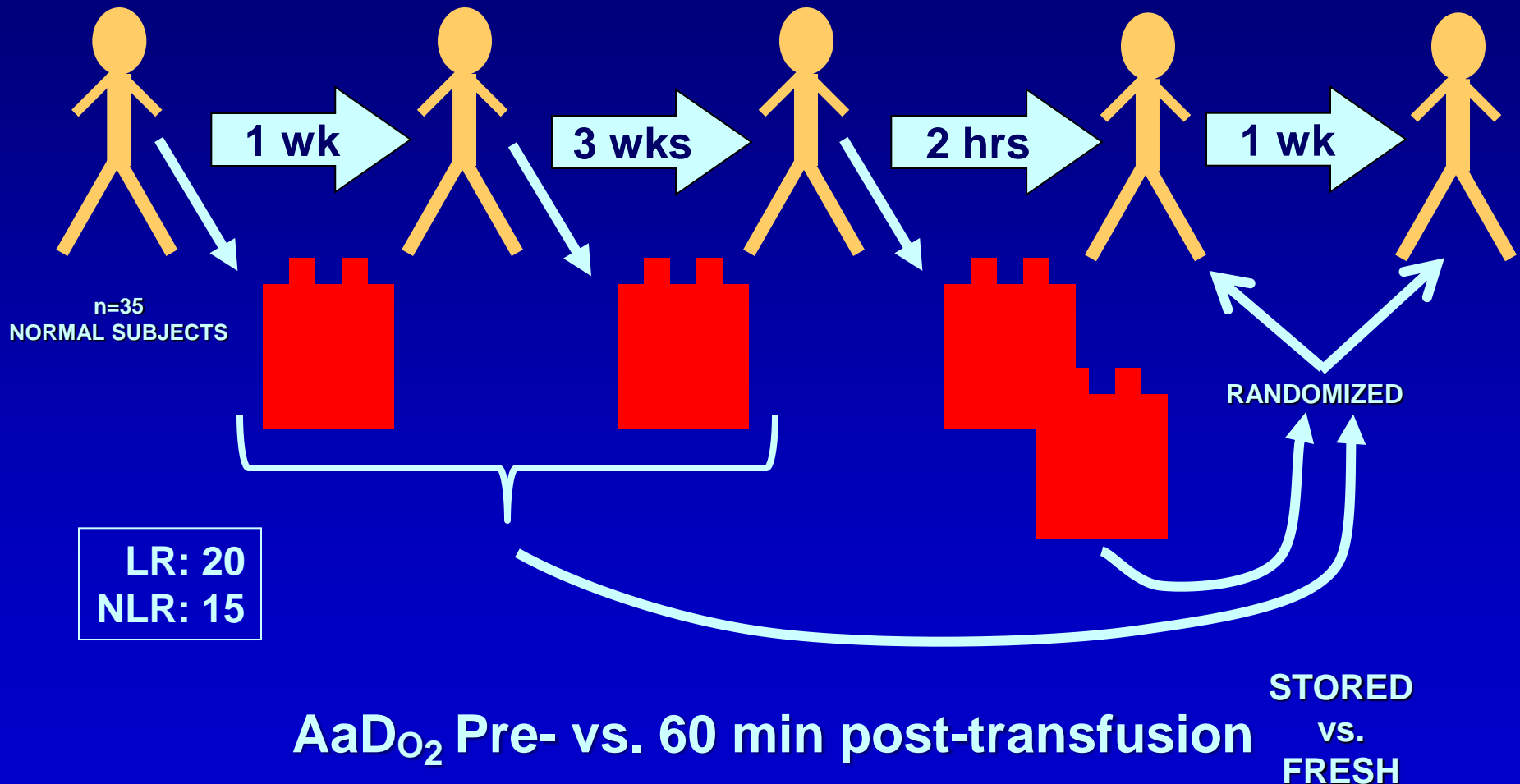
*in normal, anemic subjects*



# Fresh vs. Stored Red Cells

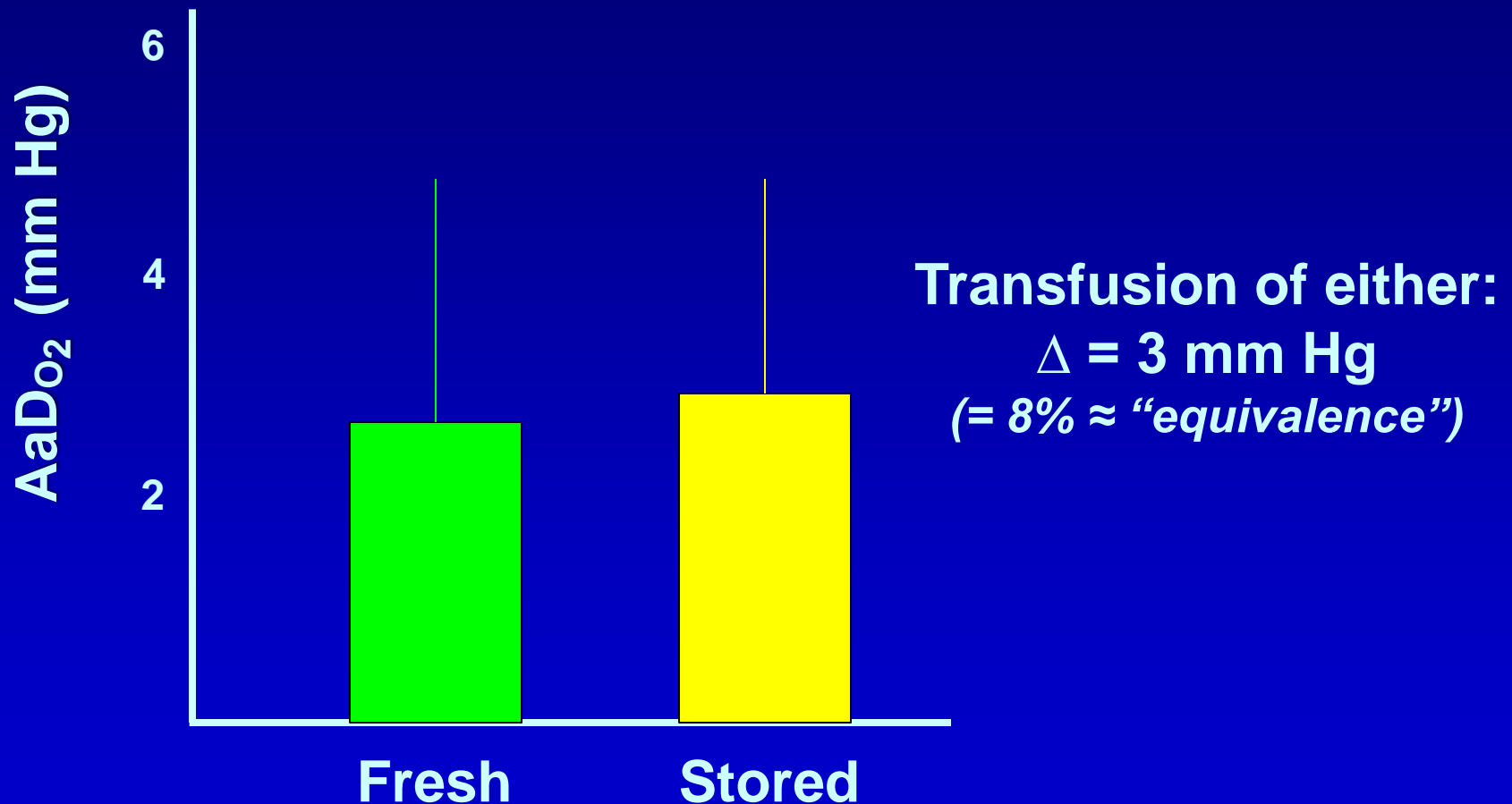


# Fresh vs. Stored Red Cells *and Pulmonary Function*

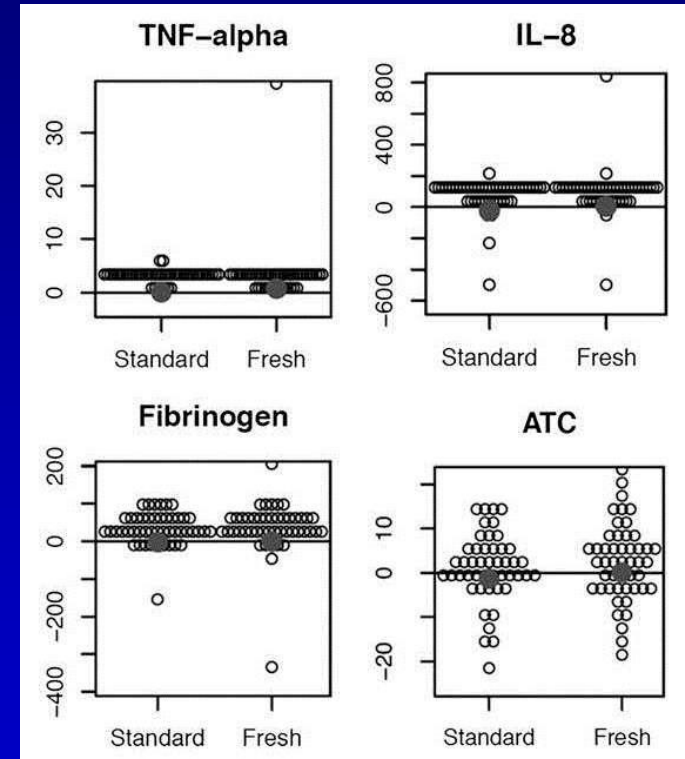
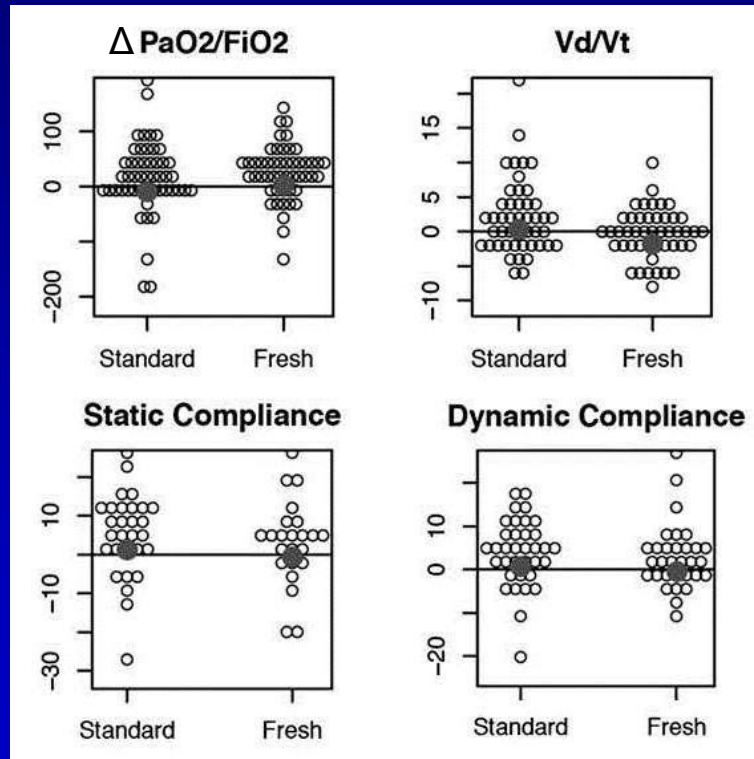
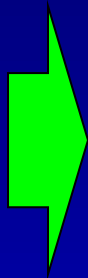


# Fresh vs. Stored Red Cells

## *and Pulmonary Function*



# Fresh vs. Stored Red Cells *and Pulmonary Function*



Storage: 27d 4d  
(median) (<5d)

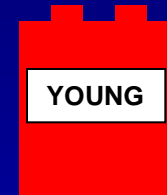
n = 50/group, randomized

# Is Old Blood Bad Blood?

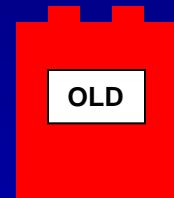
*Prospective, Randomized (Pilot) Trial*



Cardiac surgery and  
Intensive care patients



vs.



Group receiving “fresh” red cells ( $\leq 8d$ )  
had higher mortality.



# Is Old Blood Bad Blood?



**ABLE**

Intensive care patients  
n = 2500

**RANDOMIZE**

< 8d

**VS.**

Standard

**Outcome:  
90d MORTALITY**

MEAN STORAGE TIMES:      5d      22d

**As of August: 1207 enrolled**  
**Compliance = 94% (small overlap)**

# Is Old Blood Bad Blood?



**ABLE**

Intensive care patients  
n = 2500

**RANDOMIZE**

< 8d

**VS.**

Standard

**Outcome:  
90d MORTALITY**



**RECESS**

Complex cardiac  
surgery patients  
n = 1600

**RANDOMIZE**

≤ 10 d

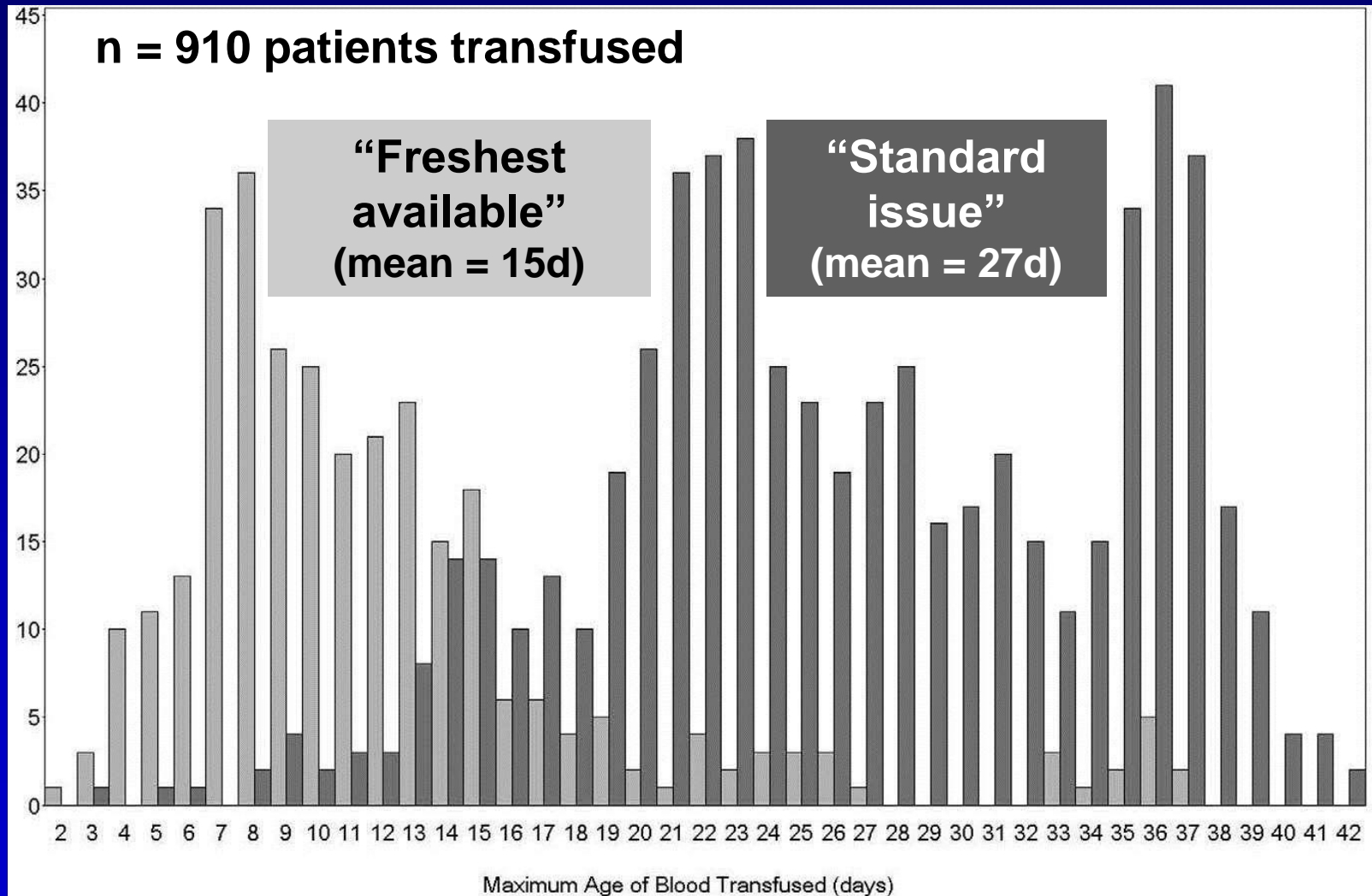
**VS.**

> 21d

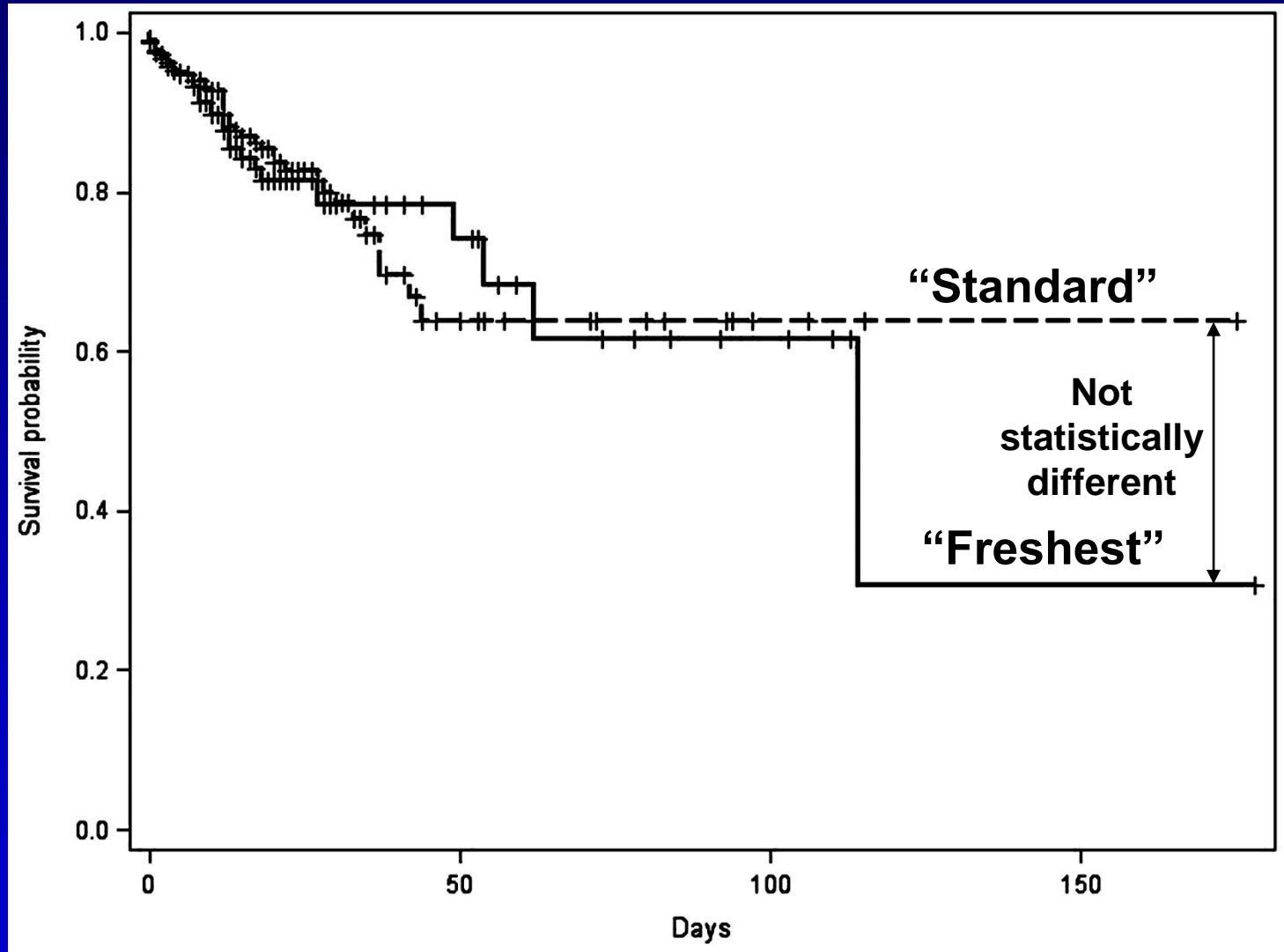
**Outcome:  
Δ MODS PO Day 7**

**(Both with companion biomarker studies)**

# Comparative Effectiveness: Pilot Trial



# Comparative Effectiveness: Pilot Trial



# Are Old Red Cell Units Dangerous?



## Cardiac Surgery Redux

n = 2800

Storage: < 14 d vs. >20 d

Outcome: Morbidity



## ARIPI

n = 2500 NICU patients (450 < 1250 g)

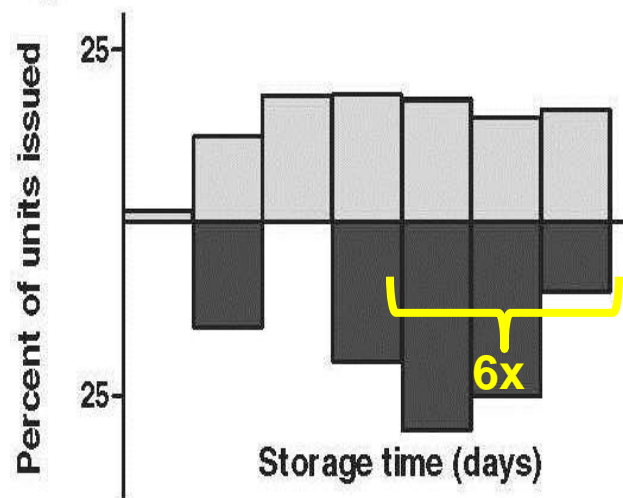
Storage: < 8 d vs. “standard”

Outcome: 90 d mortality+combined

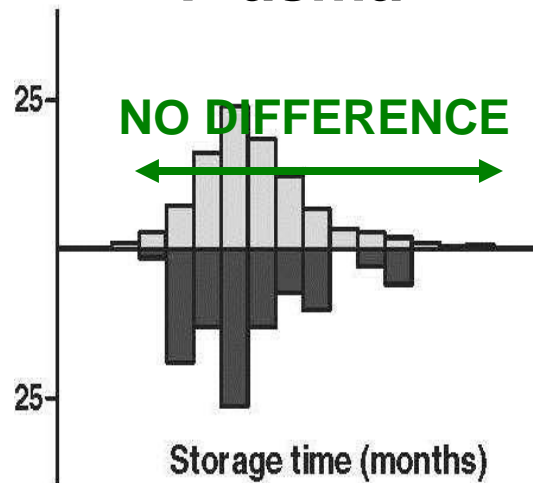
*Outcome: No difference.*

# Storage Time and TRALI

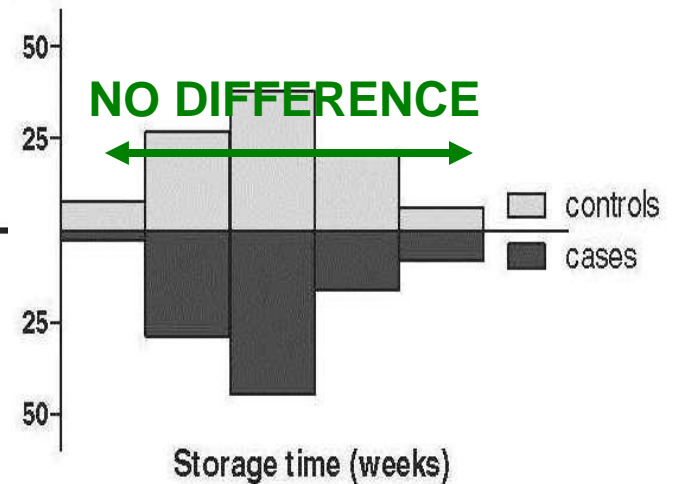
## Platelets



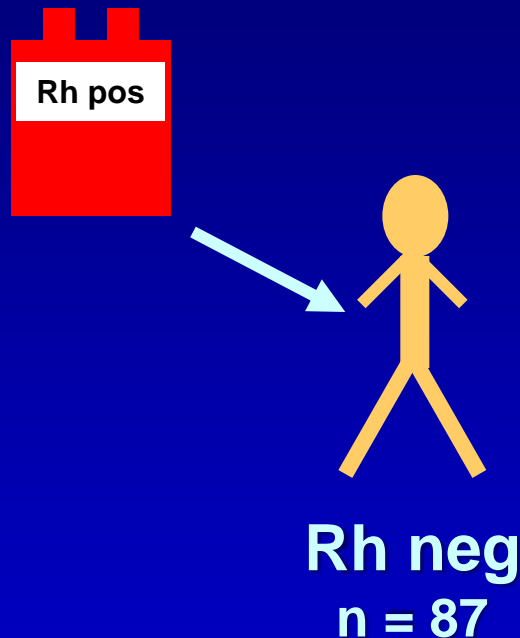
## Plasma



## Red Cells



# Storage Time and Alloimmunization



**No association between  
length of storage and  
anti-D alloimmunization**

## Meta-analysis of clinical studies of the purported deleterious effects of “old” (versus “fresh”) red blood cells: are we at equipoise?


Eleftherios C. Vamvakas

**BACKGROUND:** A meta-analysis examined whether the available data support an adequate suspicion that transfusion of old red blood cells (RBCs) is associated with increased mortality, organ failure, infection, prolonged mechanical ventilation, and prolonged stay in the hospital or the intensive care unit. Such suspicion required for intentionally exposing patients enrolled in randomized controlled trials (RCTs) to the known probable—but rare—risks of old RBCs, to document (and prevent) purported common adverse effects of RBCs.

**STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS:** Observational studies presenting adjusted results were eligible for analysis if the adequacy of the adjustment for confounding factors could be assessed. Three RCTs and 24 observational studies were retrieved. Medically and statistically homogeneous studies were integrated by fixed-effects methods. Otherwise homogeneous studies conducted in different clinical settings were integrated by random-effects methods.

**RESULTS:** Based on “as-treated” analysis, transfusion of old RBCs was associated with a significant increase in mortality (summary odds ratio, 0.38; 95% confidence interval, 0.14-0.99;  $p < 0.05$ ) across two small RCTs. Integration of *adjusted* findings on the same outcomes from observational studies conducted in the same setting, produced summary results that were either negative (in six analyses) or impossible to evaluate owing to uncontrolled confounding by the number of transfused RBCs (in two analyses).

**CONCLUSION:** The available data do not support an adequate suspicion that old RBCs may be associated with common adverse morbidity and/or mortality outcomes, so as to justify exposing experimental subjects to the other known or probable—but rare—risks of old RBCs.

 transfusion of red blood cells (RBCs) stored for

...there is a predictable association between the number of transfused RBCs and the length of storage of the oldest unit...Authors have erred overwhelmingly in the direction of not adjusting for the number of transfused RBCs.

Given the paucity of evidence on any association between transfusion of old RBCs and common adverse outcomes, the ongoing RCTs will most likely generate *null* findings....

non-WBC-reduced<sup>18-19</sup> RBCs to such adverse outcomes. The biologic plausibility of this hypothesis<sup>18-19</sup> and the

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doi: 10.1111/j.1537-2995.2009.02465.x

TRANSFUSION 2010;50:600-610.

- and then what?

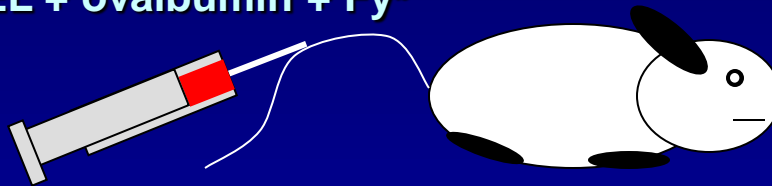




# A Simple Way Out?

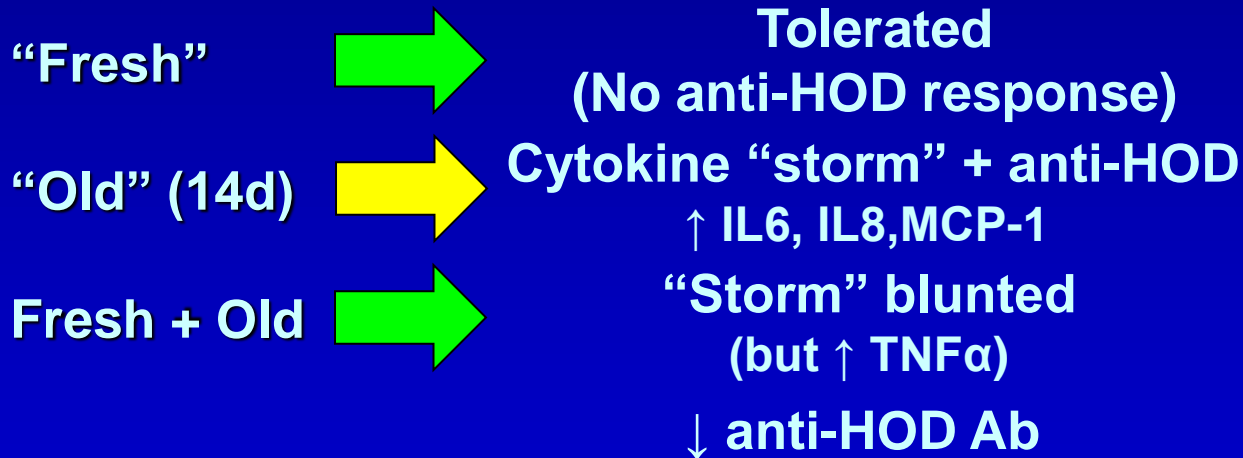
## Transfusion with transgenic RBCs

HOD: HEL + ovalbumin + Fy<sup>b</sup>



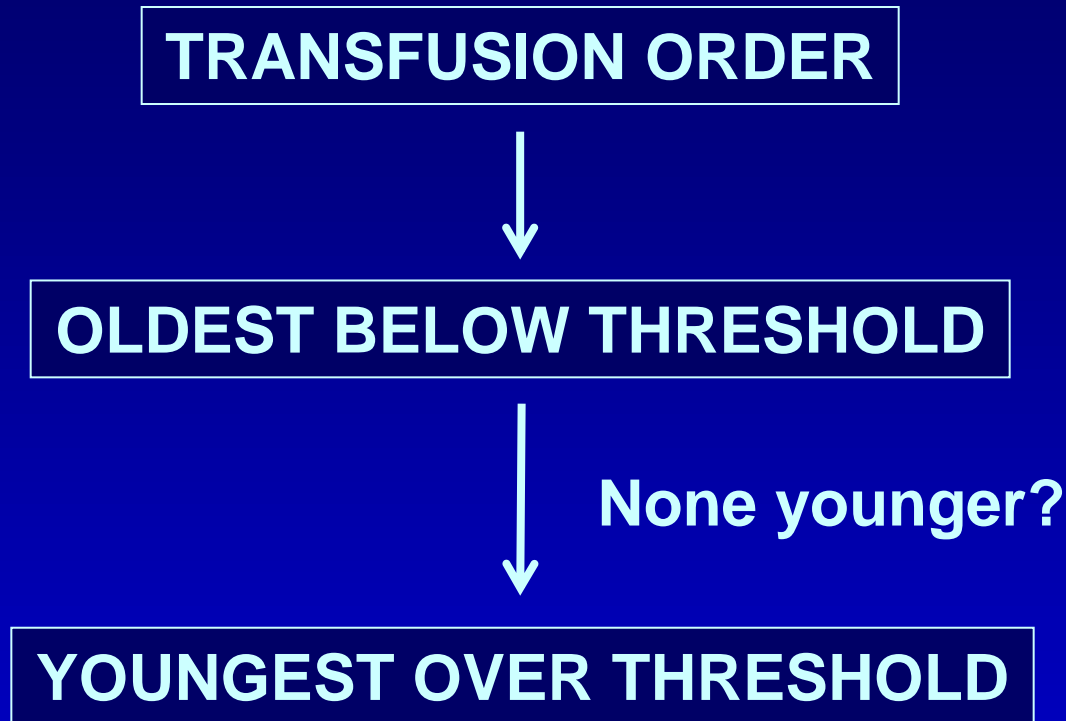
### Storage:

### In vitro cytokine analyses



MCP-1 = monocyte chemoattractant protein-1.

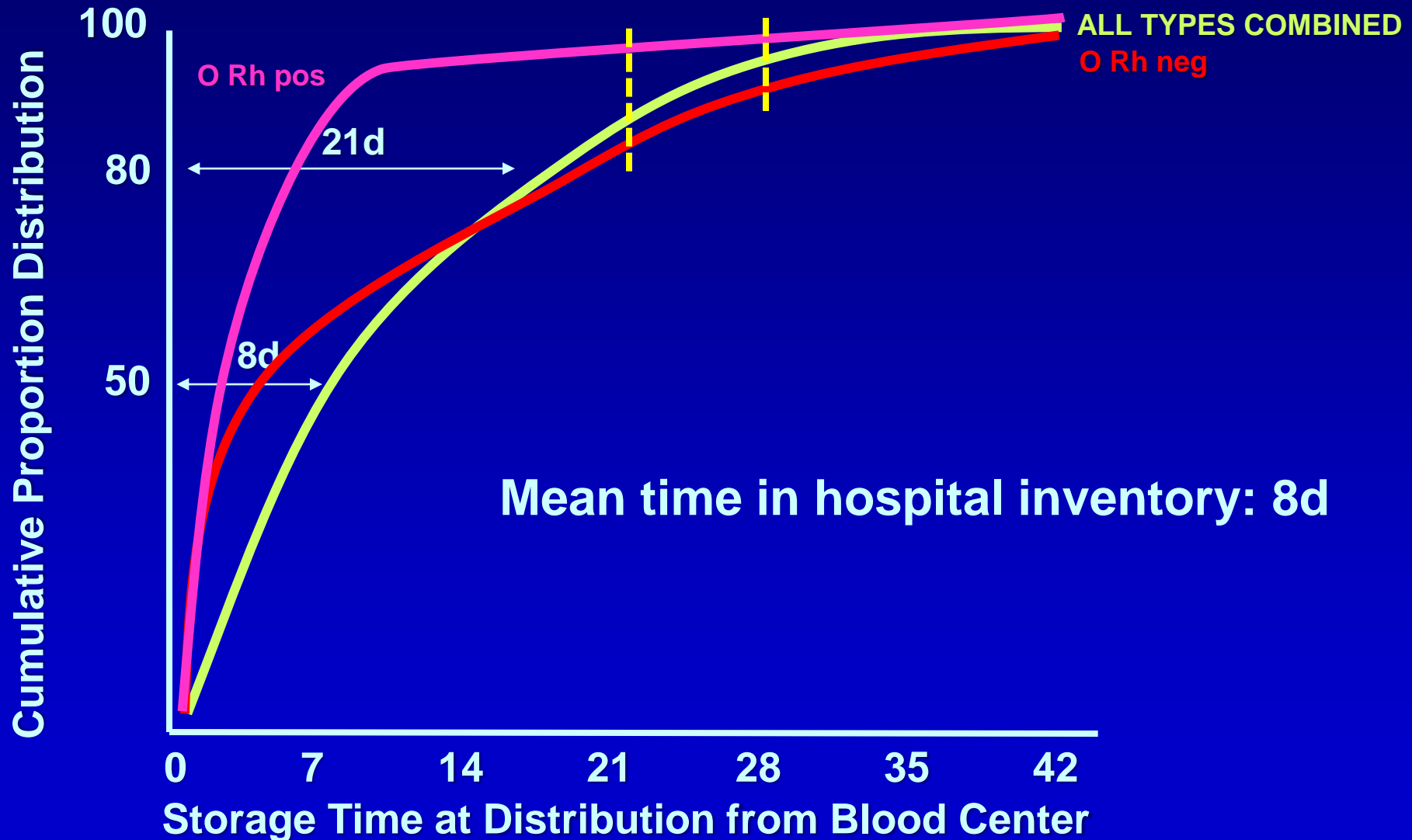
# What If? → Inventory Modeling



“Worked” in a *highly unusual, constrained* situation

*Would it work across a regional system?*

# Regional RBC Distribution Patterns



# What If? → Inventory Coercion

<u>Storage Period</u>	<u>Fee</u>
2d	\$400
3d	\$390
4d	\$380
⋮	⋮
10d	\$320
⋮	⋮
21d	\$210
⋮	⋮
41d	Free!



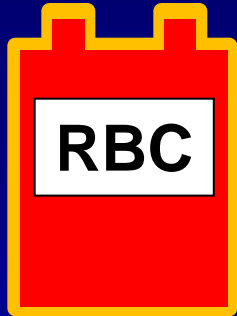
# What About Donor Differences?

Some donors are “poor storers”

- GDP/GTP pathway?
- G6PD deficiency?

Female donors have lower hemolysis

# The Gold-Plated Red Cell Unit



O negative  
Genotypically matched (35 antigens)  
Selected donor (female?); HbS negative  
Leukoreduced  
Pathogen reduced/Prion reduced  
Optimal additive solution  
G6PD augmented  
Reducing environment/Hypoxic storage  
Storage with plasticizer without recipient effects  
Stored at 70  
Reconstituted  
Washed/Filtered  
Qualified by functional parameters and biomarker analysis  
Transfused according to evidence-based decision making  
Followed by: Inhaled NO, ADAMTS-13 activator,  
anti-inflammatories, and a chaser of rHaptoglobin

Improved outcome –  
not longer storage



# Predicting the Future



**ABLE**



**RECESS**



**ARIPI**

The power of one's own data is enormous.  
The comprehension of statistics is minimal.  
Secondary endpoint differences will be found.

**REGULATORY  
INTEREST**

**CLINICIANS'  
INTEREST**

**Hospitals: Will it cost me less overall?**

***Prove it!***

# **Experienced or Enfeebled?**

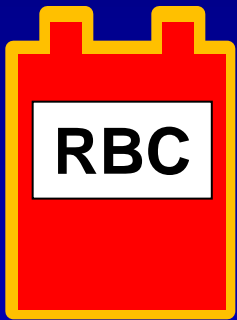
## ***Does Red Cell Storage Time Affect Patient Outcome?***

**Yes, storage lesions are there...**

**...but what is their clinical significance,  
and what can we do about it?**

# **Experienced or Enfeebled?**

## ***Does Red Cell Storage Time Affect Patient Outcome?***



***What parameters are most important in improving  
the quality of the red cells we transfuse?***

