



NHSBT Patient Blood Management Newsletter

Welcome

This is the third newsletter produced by the NHSBT Patient Blood Management Team for clinical staff. The Team promotes appropriate use of all blood components and their alternatives across England and North Wales by providing resources, support and information.

This edition of our newsletter focuses on the appropriate use of platelets

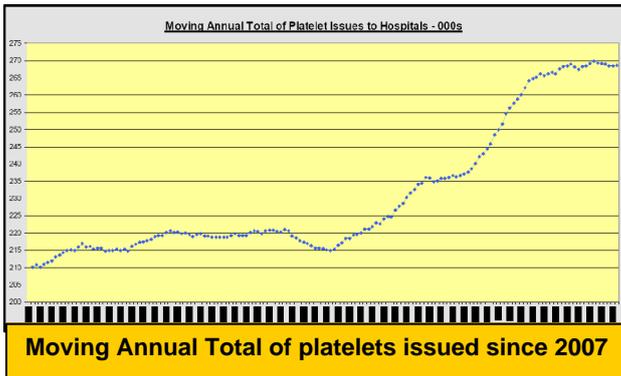
What are platelets and why do we need them?



Platelets are tiny cells produced in the bone marrow which are essential for clotting (haemostasis). Platelets are used in two distinct situations: to prevent bleeding (prophylactic), for example prior to invasive procedures in patients who have a low platelet count or to treat active bleeding (therapeutic). Some treatments such as chemotherapy can decrease the production of platelets, whilst other medications such as Aspirin and Clopidogrel may impede on how platelets function.

**Prescribing Platelets?
Then use the 'Platelet
Transfusion Mobile Site'**

Platelets are a popular blood component!



Issues of platelets have significantly increased in recent years. Factors that may influence this change include:

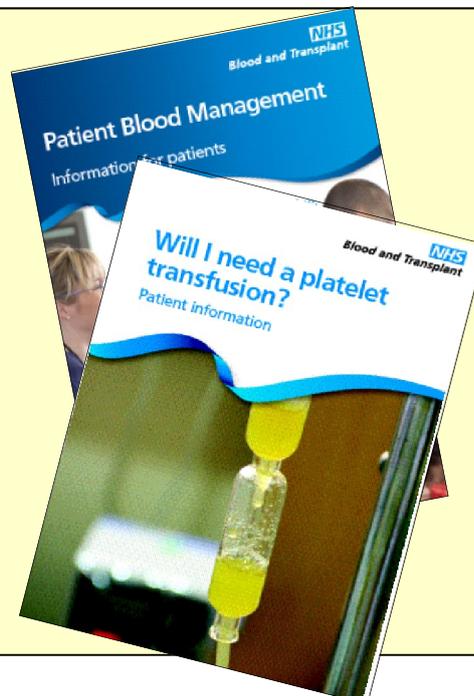
- a rise in the general population
- an ageing population
- an increase in the incidence and prevalence of haematological malignancies - survival has improved
- a significant change in the management of patients with haematological malignancies

Estcourt L. J. (2014) Why has demand for platelet components increased? A review. *Transfusion Medicine* 24 (5) 260-268

Patient Blood Management – Using Platelets Wisely

Prior to giving platelets consider:

- What are the indications for transfusion to this patient?
- Are there alternatives which could be used in preference to platelet transfusion?
- Has the indication been documented in the patient's record and on the request form?
- Has the patient received a patient information leaflet on platelets and has been consented to receive the transfusion?



Why avoid unnecessary use of platelets?

Transfusion of any blood component carries risks.

Transfusion of platelets are associated with a higher risk of these transfusion reactions:

- **TRALI (Transfusion Related Acute Lung Injury)**
- **Allergic reactions**
- **Febrile reactions**
- **Bacterial contamination**

What is the evidence?

The National Comparative Audit of Platelet use in Haematology 2010, showed that 28% of platelet transfusions were inappropriately given based on national guidelines. Reasons for inappropriate transfusions included:

- **Transfusion given above recommended thresholds**
- **Prophylactic administration when not indicated**
- **'Double dose' administration**

A double dose is when two packs of platelets are administered in one episode.



Platelet donations are a precious and limited resource.

Did you know?

Platelets have a shelf-life of just 7 days

One standard ATD platelet costs £196.96

One HLA matched platelet costs £465.08

Platelets must NEVER be chilled or stored in a fridge

The London Platelet Action Group was set up in 2011 to address appropriate usage and wastage. Outputs from the group include:

- 'Top Ten tips' to reduce wastage
- Platelet champions in hospitals
- 'Back to basics' video on You Tube



Find out more:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/LondonRTC>

Tips for Appropriate Use and Reducing Wastage

- Use locally agreed triggers for transfusion based on national guidelines
- Do not routinely transfuse 2 units of platelets prophylactically
- If you have ordered platelets and no longer need them, please let the laboratory know asap so that they can be allocated to someone else before they expire
- Develop and implement protocols for the management of patients taking anti-platelet drugs that may increase of bleeding

There are a series of educational tools and resources to help promote appropriate use of platelets at:

<http://hospital.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management-resources/platelet-resources/>

NHSBT PBM Teams Celebrate Successful PBM Clinical Haematology Conference

This conference was held on the 19th of November 2014 in Birmingham and was attended by nearly 200 delegates. The conference was opened by Professor Adrian Newland, former Chair of the National Blood Transfusion Committee. The programme included a range of talks about safe and appropriate use of blood components. Other highlights included presentations about the non-medical authorisation of blood components and patient consent.

Presentations from this conference are available on-line at:

<http://hospital.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management-resources/general-resources/>



For further information please contact:

NHSBT.customerservice@nhsbt.nhs.uk

01865 381038

Also visit the website:

<http://hospital.blood.co.uk/>

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Further reading

Platelet Resources:

<http://hospital.blood.co.uk/patient-services/patient-blood-management-resources/platelet-resources/>

An edition of 'Transfusion' dedicated to PBM:
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/trf.2014.54.issue-10pt2/issuetoc>

New NICE guidance on ROTEM/TEG/Sonclot:
www.nice.org.uk/guidance/dg13