

Why is blood conservation necessary?

Blood conservation:

- May reduce your length of stay in hospital
- May improve your surgical recovery time
- May reduce your exposure to viruses and infection from receiving blood
- Preserves the existing hospital blood supply
- Patients know their options to a blood transfusion

Who can I call for more information or, to make an appointment with a Blood conservation coordinator?

For help or more information, please contact the ONTraC Blood Conservation Coordinator at your hospital.

Please call:

Carla Delisle, RN
Blood Conservation Coordinator

705-523-7100 ext. 8695

The Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) supports blood management or blood conservation. ONTraC is a provincial Blood Conservation Program developed by the Ministry of Health.



www.ontracprogram.com

Developed Date, 2011

Perioperative Blood Conservation

Patient Blood Management – Preparing for Surgery



Health Sciences North
Horizon Santé-Nord

A Program of the Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC)

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(French version available upon request)

Why is my blood so important and how does it affect my body?

- Your blood is made up of many different parts; one important part is the red blood cells (RBC). The RBC's carry oxygen to all your organs and tissues.
- The oxygen is released by an iron-rich protein called hemoglobin (Hgb) and is found inside the RBC's.
- Good levels of hemoglobin may also help you to avoid a blood transfusion during your hospital stay.

How do I know if the hemoglobin levels in my body are good?

Your surgeon may order a blood test called a complete blood count (CBC). This test will determine the level of RBC's and hemoglobin in your blood. Normal hemoglobin levels are different in men and women.

Normal hemoglobin ranges* for men and women are:

Men: 140 g/L to 180 g/L

Women: 120g/L to 160 g/l

*Reference: Canadian Blood Services:
http://www.bloodservices.ca/centreapps/internet/uw_v502_mainengine.nsf/page/E_Hemoglobin?OpenDocument

What happens if the test shows my levels are low?

If the blood test shows that your hemoglobin levels are low, this is called "anemia." If you are anemic before surgery, this may increase your chance of receiving a blood transfusion during your hospital stay.

Your physician will assess your anemia and decide if you need more testing and treatment.

Will I need a blood transfusion during my surgery?

You may need a blood transfusion during, or possibly after your surgery to replace any of your blood that was lost during the procedure.

How much blood will I lose during my surgery?

The amount of blood that you may lose will depend upon the type of surgery you are having. Your physician will decide if a blood transfusion is needed during and/or after your surgery.

What is blood management or blood conservation?

Blood management or blood conservation aims to reduce or avoid the need for a blood transfusion during or after your surgery. Your surgeon and the Blood Conservation team will assess your need for a transfusion. They may suggest the use of one, or a combination of treatments to improve your own blood supply before surgery.

Some of these treatments are:

- An iron-rich diet
- Taking oral Iron supplements
- Intravenous (IV) Iron supplement
- Taking a medication called "Erythropoietin" (EPO) which is given by an injection. EPO helps the body to produce more RBCs and increase hemoglobin.

What can be done to decrease my need for a blood transfusion?

The health care team which may include the surgeon and/or anesthetist and the Blood Conservation Coordinator will work with you to plan the best way to try to avoid or reduce the need for a blood transfusion during your hospital stay. You should know that it is not always possible to avoid having a blood transfusion.