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Patient and Family Information

# **IMPROVING PATIENT OUTCOMES THROUGH PATIENT BLOOD MANAGEMENT**

The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical conditions.

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## **Patient blood management (PBM)**

Patient blood management (PBM) is the use of transfusion alternatives and approved pharmacologic and technical modalities aimed at minimising or avoiding the reliance on allogeneic blood transfusions. Our goals are to improve patient outcomes through use of various modalities to boost the patient's own red cell mass, minimise blood loss and conserve their own blood. Although blood transfusions are essential and unavoidable during certain types of surgery or when unexpectedly large amounts of blood are lost, they do carry some risks.

### **Risks of blood transfusions**

- Risks of reactions towards transfused blood which can range from mild to severe
- Risks of transfusion transmitted infections, due to modern day limitations of screening for infectious diseases
- Risks of immunosuppression which increases infection risks

### **Why should anaemia be corrected before surgery?**

Patients who are anaemic before going into surgery are at a higher risk of receiving blood transfusions, therefore, they are exposed to a higher risk of complications that may lead to prolonged hospitalisation. Treatment of anaemia is a part of preparing every patient who is undergoing elective procedures where a substantial blood loss is anticipated.

If you are found to be anaemic before surgery, you will be referred to the Anaemia Clinic for evaluation and treatment before your surgery.

## **Anaemia Clinic Information**

The anaemia clinic offers pre-surgical anaemia testing and management of the different types of anaemia. During the clinic, you will be asked questions about your health and further tests will be conducted. The condition causing your anaemia will be determined and treatment given for your anaemia.

It is run by a haematologist, with support from an anaemia nurse. A haematologist is a physician who specialises in blood and bone marrow diseases.

### **Blood conservation strategies**

There are methods employed during surgery which salvages blood that you lose and returns this back to you. These methods can reduce the need for blood transfusion. Not everyone or every surgery is suited for blood conservation strategies. You can speak to your surgeon and anaesthetist on whether such methods are suitable for your surgery.

For further information, you may speak to your surgeon, anaesthetist and haematologist.

### **Website resources**

[www.blood.gov.au/patients](http://www.blood.gov.au/patients)