

## Blood Management Service Information for Patients

If your health care provider has sent a referral to Blood Management Service it is likely because he or she feels that you may benefit from this no-cost service. That is you may be at a risk for a blood transfusion where alternatives exist.

Once the referral is received at Blood Management Service one of the Nurse Coordinators will contact you by telephone. During the initial telephone call information is exchanged regarding the Blood Management Service provided as well as individualized health history details. In some cases additional tests are needed in order to complete the pre-operative blood management evaluation. This is done along with primary care providers whenever possible.

In some cases Blood Management Service simply follows the patient through the peri-operative journey. This is likely because there is no immediate need for alternatives but a low risk for transfusion is present. In this scenario, Nurse Coordinators call back to patients every few weeks or months until the day of surgery. By following the patient in this way, Blood Management Service remains aware of changes in patient conditions and will be readily available to offer alternatives as needed.

In other cases where there is a greater risk for transfusion, recommendations for alternatives are offered. Some of the alternatives are iron supplementation or red cell stimulating medications. Intraoperative blood conservation strategies may be utilized if appropriate and available. These are Cell Salvage and Acute Normovolemic Hemodilution. Blood Management Service Nurse Coordinators can provide additional information on these methods.

In the past preoperative autologous donation was offered as a blood conservation strategy. Over recent years this procedure has fallen out of favor because of the risks associated with donation, storage and reinfusion of one's own blood. It is seldom offered nowadays but would be considered for patients with extremely rare blood types undergoing a high blood loss procedure.

Over the last several years surgical techniques have improved considerably reducing the need for blood transfusions post operatively. Blood transfusions are still recommended when their benefit outweighs their risk. This is an individualized decision made by patients, family members and health care providers. Blood Management Nurse Coordinators can assist in this process.

If you would like to speak to a Nurse Coordinator you may call **Blood Management Service at 204-787-1277.**

**For more information please visit [www.bestbloodmanitoba.ca](http://www.bestbloodmanitoba.ca)**