
BLOOD MANAGEMENT, TRANSFUSIONS AND SURGERY

Blood conservation is an important part of Cleveland Clinic's approach to surgery and patient care. Patient blood management means that Cleveland Clinic uses a variety of techniques, when applicable, to manage blood before, during, and after surgery.

What's the importance of blood?

There are certain components of blood that are especially important to monitor in patients about to undergo surgery. These include:

- **Red blood cells** – carry oxygen to different tissues in the body, which keeps them well functioning
- **Platelets** – small particles that help prevent or stop bleeding

What are the goals of patient blood management?

The goals of patient blood management are to preserve and boost the blood in your body. To achieve these goals, steps will be taken to:

- Avoid or lessen blood loss
- Use medicines or vitamins to help the body make blood
- Use blood transfusions only when needed

How do I, as the patient, participate in my blood management needs?

One way you can be of assistance is to tell your doctor about all the products you are taking, including:

- All your medications
- All herbal supplements
- All over-the-counter preparations

Some of these products could increase bleeding and may need to be stopped or changed before your surgery.

Your doctor will determine if you are at risk of low blood counts. If you are at risk, your doctor will:

- Order blood tests (you will need to have blood drawn 3 to 4 weeks before surgery).
- Prescribe blood building treatment, including vitamins and medications.
- Tell you when to stop taking certain medications or supplements.
- Discuss the risks and benefits of blood transfusion, and what can be done to avoid transfusion.

You must follow the doctor's instructions carefully.

What patient blood management steps will occur during and after surgery?

During surgery, any of the following may be used to reduce or correct bleeding:

- Devices and tools to lessen bleeding
- Human products or artificial products to lessen bleeding
- Return your own lost blood after it has been cleaned
- Medications to lessen bleeding
- Blood transfusions

After surgery, any of the following may be used to preserve or increase your blood counts:

- Smaller amounts of blood taken for lab testing
- Medicines to improve blood counts
- Blood transfusions

Where can I find more information about patient blood management?

Ask your Cleveland Clinic doctor or nurse

Cleveland Clinic. A patient's guide to blood transfusions.

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/a-patients-guide-to-blood-transfusions>

Society for Advancement of Blood Management. A guide to patient blood management.

<https://www.sabm.org/sites/default/files/Guide%20to%20PBM%202016.pdf>

International Foundation for Patient Blood Management. Patient Blood Management for Patients. <http://www.ifpbm.org/network/patients>