



BCP Implements New Protocol for Plasmapheresis Donations

As of February 26, 2007, Blood Centers of the Pacific implemented a new measure to further protect patients receiving donated blood. We're asking our plasmapheresis donors who've been pregnant or transfused to switch to another form of lifesaving donation, such as double red cells or whole blood. The reason for this is to reduce the risk of a serious transfusion reaction in patients known as TRALI.

What is TRALI?

TRALI, or Transfusion-Related Acute Lung Injury, is a rare lung condition that occurs in some patients after receiving blood. One cause for TRALI is thought to be antibodies in the transfused plasma, a component of blood. These antibodies are made by blood donors who have been pregnant or transfused.

Why does this affect only those who've been pregnant or transfused?

Blood donors who've been pregnant or received a transfusion may have developed antibodies against white cells, just as some people develop antibodies or allergies to seafood or bee stings. If their blood is transfused into a susceptible patient, that patient may develop TRALI.

How do I know if I have these antibodies? Can you test me?

A test for these antibodies is not yet widely available for routine blood donor use. Eventually, when a test is widely available, we will be able to tell which donors have antibodies and which don't.

If I have these antibodies, does it mean I'm ill?

These antibodies DO NOT affect the donor's health. However, this could cause harm when transfused to susceptible patients.

If I have these antibodies but don't know it, could my donated blood have harmed someone already?

Luckily, TRALI is uncommon. It is very unlikely that your blood has caused it. In a few cases where a suspected TRALI reaction has been reported, our investigation included notifying the donor and performing follow-up tests.

If I have been pregnant or transfused, can I still donate blood?

Absolutely! All we ask is that you donate something other than plasmapheresis – like whole blood or red blood cells. To learn more about donating whole blood or red blood cells, please call 888-393-4483.

Where can I get more information about TRALI?

Please click on the following links:

<http://www.fda.gov/>

http://www.aabb.org/Content/Members_Area/Association_Bulletins/ab06-08.htm

<http://members.americasblood.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=display.showPage&pageID=127>