UNIVERSITÄTS KLINIKUM FREIBURG

Institut für
Transfusionsmedizin
und Gentherapie

INFORMATION SHEET

Transfusion and use of blood products

Dear Colleagues,

The proper handling of blood products is an important part of medical treatment concepts. Specifically, the state-of-the-art application of blood products is mandatory, particularly considering evidence-based clinical indication to make optimum therapeutic use of the available blood products. Further, the limited availability of blood products, obtained from voluntary blood donations, calls for a particular careful handling.

Physicians prescribing and administering blood products to patients must adhere to the applicable laws and guidelines.

Please note that the University of Freiburg Medical Center´s SOP “Transfusion of Blood Products” (roXtra ID 8899) and the specific procedural guidelines in the respective clinical departments are also legally binding.

The following rules and standards must be observed:

The Hemotherapy Guideline, issued by the German Medical Association together with the Paul Ehrlich Institute, represent the current standard of Medical Science and Technology in Germany pertaining also for the application of blood products.
Responsibility for issuing these guidelines has been governed in Germany since 1998 by the Transfusion Act (TFG).

The Guidelines for Treatment with Blood Components and Plasma Derivatives, issued by the German Medical Association, provide recommendations for the selection, indication and therapeutic use of blood components and plasma derivatives.

The University of Freiburg Medical Center´s general procedural guidelines are delineated in the SOP for the “Transfusion of Blood Products" (roXtra ID 8899) and in department-specific procedural instructions on the transfusion of blood products. These documents describe the responsibilities, qualifications and tasks of medical and non-medical personnel. In addition, they specify the procedures and processes involved in the procurement, transportation and storage of blood and blood products, the preparation and administration of blood products and the measures that ensure safe, efficient and economic treatment with blood products and compliance with the applicable regulations.

The laws and guidelines can be downloaded from the internet (www.bäk.de) and/or - as well as the internal procedural guidelines for the hospital – from the quality management documentation department of the respective hospital / department in roXtra on their intranet site and/or from the intranet site of the Institute for Transfusion Medicine and Gene Therapy of the University of Freiburg Medical Center.

Medical responsibility for transfusions of blood products

The transfusion of blood products must be performed by a physician. Such, physicians are responsible for the indication, preparation and administration of blood transfusions as well as the identification and investigation of transfusion reactions of possible side effects.

Physicians have particular responsibility with regard to the following points:

- A strict indication for a blood transfusion, provided by a physician experienced in hemotherapy
- Blood products can only be provided upon written prescription request from a physician.
- Before blood transfusion, the patient must be informed about the risks, side effects and, if applicable, alternative treatment methods (such as preoperative autologous blood collection), and he/she should give their informed consent.
- In an emergency, the patient must be informed in retrospect (for safety purposes).
- **Unambiguous verification of the patient`s identity is mandatory for bloodsamples. The blood sample must always be drawn in a correctly labelled container (FIRST label the container, THEN draw the blood). Unambiguous verification of the patient`s identity before transfusion by asking the patient for his/her name, surname and date of birth.** If the blood transfusion is administered in the context of on-call emergency duty, the attending nursing staff may assist in questioning the patient.
- **A bedside test of the recipient's blood must immediately precede the transfusion of red blood cell concentrates and granulocytes, as well as before plasma exchange therapy. The test must be carried out without exception bedside by the physician who initiates the blood transfusion** (in the case of autologous blood, the blood product should also be tested). **The bedside test is imperative - even in an emergency!!!**
- The necessary documentation for the blood transfusion must be complete.
- The container with residual blood products, transfusion apparatus and the bedside test are sealed in sterile packaging and stored in a dedicated fridge for 24 hours.
- Only trained nursing personnel may supervise blood transfusions initiated by doctors.

This information sheet is intended to inform you about the laws, guidelines and procedural instructions regarding the "application of blood products". The above mentioned documents are available on the internet and intranet, and we ask that you take note of their contents.

If you have any further questions concerning hemotherapy, or the use of blood products, or if you lack experience and/or are uncertain, please consult those responsible for blood transfusion at your hospital / department, or directly contact the Institute for Transfusion Medicine and Gene Therapy of Freiburg University Hospital.

Your contact persons are:

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