Patient blood management

Patient blood management uses a team approach to assess a patient’s blood management needs. The goal of the team is to develop a plan of care that uses pharmaceuticals, technology and techniques to decrease blood loss and to enhance blood cell production. This approach reduces or eliminates the need for a blood transfusion.

What is patient blood management?

Patient Blood Management is the timely application of evidence-based medical and surgical concepts designed to maintain hemoglobin concentration, optimize hemostasis and minimize blood loss in an effort to improve patient outcome.

Why is patient blood management necessary?

- Reduces unnecessary hospital and patient costs.
- Improves patient safety by minimizing exposure to blood.
- May reduce hospital length of stay and reduces exposure to viruses and other blood-borne diseases.
- May reduce the risk of hospital acquired complications and infections.
- Conserves use of a precious community resource.

Check your patient’s blood count early!

A Complete Blood Count (CBC) should be done. Anemia is not just a diagnosis, it is a manifestation of an underlying disease. Diagnose anemia and treat appropriately. A combination of these strategies may be used:

1. Pre-operative blood management strategies
   - If your patient is anemic, the following medications may be used to raise their blood count:
     - Iron therapy: oral and intravenous
     - Judicious use of the appropriate erythropoiesis stimulating agent (ESA)
     - Vitamin B6, B12, C, folic acid
     - Nutritional support
     - Consider deep vein thrombosis (DVT) prophylaxis

2. Intra-operative blood management strategies
   - Intra-operative blood salvage - a process of collecting a patient's blood lost during surgery and returning these cells after appropriate processing
   - Volume expanders: Crystalloids, Colloids
   - Hemostatic agents: Oral, parenteral, and topical
   - Meticulous surgical techniques
   - Acute Normovolemic Hemodilution - removal of a calculated amount of blood during surgery, replaced with intravenous (IV) fluids, and returned after surgery

3. Post-operative blood management strategies
   - Post-operative blood salvage
   - Judicious use of the appropriate erythropoiesis stimulating agent (ESA)
   - Nutritional support
   - Consider deep vein thrombosis (DVT) prophylaxis

For more information on Reading Hospital’s Patient Blood Management Program call 484-628-4111.