

Blood Conservation Program

Providing choices in quality blood conservation or bloodless medicine

Equipped with leading medical technology and a caring, highly skilled team, St. Vincent Regional Hospital offers a special service for those desiring blood conservation techniques in order to avoid blood transfusion. It is our goal to ensure the entire community access to high quality medical care that respects informed personal choice and involvement in your plan of care.

There are many reasons for choosing blood conservation methods when medically appropriate. Some patients have deeply held religious beliefs that may prohibit receiving blood transfusions and others may want to minimize or eliminate the need for donor blood during surgery.

Benefits of Blood Conservation Care

- Minimize patient exposure to viruses and other blood borne diseases
- Positive impact on healing and enhances the recovery process
- Possibly reduce hospital stay
- Reduce stress on the immune system
- Minimize chance of post-operative infections after surgery
- Preservation of limited national blood supply

The Role of Blood in Your Body

- Hemoglobin, a protein in the blood, carries oxygen. A below normal hemoglobin is called anemia.
- Because hemoglobin is made up of iron, nutrition plays a role in planning for surgery. Discuss iron supplementation with your doctor or registered dietician.
- Another way to measure normal blood levels is a Hematocrit, or the ratio of red blood cells in the overall volume of blood.

Every Drop Counts

When planning for blood conservation, it's helpful to ask your physician(s) these questions:

- What are my available options to increase my blood count or to prepare my body for blood loss before, during and after surgery? Examples: medications, nutrition, surgical options, post-surgery care.
- What are the benefits/risks if I choose to minimize or avoid blood transfusions?
- If my blood count is low after surgery, what are some options available to prevent further blood loss and/or increase my blood count after surgery?

Treatment of Minors

St. Vincent Regional Hospital is committed to organized treatment of all pediatric patients. Families seeking a level of care for a minor that includes abstaining from blood transfusion should consult with your physician in advance, if possible, for the best plan of care.

Please be aware that state and federal laws may impose limitations on the ability to withhold or withdraw blood transfusions or blood therapy from minors, particularly in life-threatening situations.

How Do I Make My Wishes Known?

- Complete the Consent for Blood Component Therapy form.
- Bring an Advance Directive for your medical record.
- If you do not have a written directive, or would like to update an existing directive, you may complete the 5 Wishes Advance Directive Booklet before surgery.

Standard of Care

Blood Conservation is a standard in the St. Vincent Regional Hospital practice of involving patients in the design of their care. We honor the patients desire to avoid blood replacement therapy by embracing an approach to minimize blood collection and loss.

The staff at St. Vincent Regional Hospital values the healing of the whole person, believing this to be a commitment to restoring the patient to good health. Your concerns and beliefs are important to us, and our experienced team of physicians, surgeons, registered nurses, laboratorians, and technicians have received training in the needs of all patient groups. They are personally committed to providing you with the highest standard of care.