

Going Home After a Blood Transfusion

A Blood transfusion is a medical treatment where donated blood or blood products are given to you through a narrow tube placed in a vein in your arm. Your risk of having a reaction with a blood transfusion is low. This handout will give you information on the symptoms you may have with a blood transfusion reaction and what you will need to do if you have these symptoms.

Please bring this handout with you if you need to see a doctor.

Mild symptoms you may have:	What to do if you have these symptoms:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fever above 38.0°C (100.4°F) for more than one (1) hour • Mild chills – feeling cold • Mild headache 	<p><u>For patients having chemotherapy treatment</u> Go to the closest Emergency Department.</p> <p><u>For all other patients</u> Take an over the counter medication for fever or headache, such as Tylenol (acetaminophen). Follow the directions on the bottle. <u>Do not</u> take this medication if your doctor has told you not to.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild rash, hives, itching 	<p>Take an over the counter medication for allergies, such as Benadryl (diphenhydramine) or Reactin (cetirizine). Follow the directions on the bottle. <u>Do not</u> take this medication if your doctor has told you not to.</p>
Serious symptoms:	What to do if you have these symptoms:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild symptoms (listed above) that have not gone away <u>one (1) hour after taking medication</u> • High fever – Temperature of 39.0°C (102.2°F) • Nausea or vomiting 	<p>Have someone drive you to see a doctor. For example: your family doctor, Urgent Care, or the closest Emergency Department.</p>
Critical symptoms:	What to do if you have these symptoms:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe chills – your body is shaking • Problems breathing or feeling very short of breath • Blood in your urine or dark coloured urine (even days after your transfusion) • Migraine or severe headache 	<p><u>Call 911 right away</u></p> <p>You need to be taken to the closest Emergency Department <u>right away</u>.</p> <p><u>Do not</u> drive yourself to the Emergency Department.</p>

This section is for medical staff only.

Attention: Health Practitioner

Please notify the Transfusion Laboratory of this transfusion reaction to have your patient's transfusion history updated.
Lakeridge Health Transfusion Medicine Laboratory, Oshawa Hospital (905) 576-8711, extension 33440