

Blood Administration Safety Guide

Before picking up blood products:

- ✓ Confirm the correct patient by verifying the demographic label to the patient's armband.
- ✓ Confirm that a valid, signed blood transfusion consent is present.
- ✓ Review and release the nursing transfusion order (NTO) after confirming it is the appropriate blood product, the number of units, and timing of administration.
- ✓ Patient is ready for transfusion (aware, vitals done, and supplies ready).

Why? Confirming all these elements promotes patient safety and helps prevent blood waste.

Dual verification at the bedside by reading aloud and confirming:

- ✓ Correct patient (name + DOB/MRN).
- ✓ Follow appropriate administration workflows (Rover vs. manual charting)
- ✓ Verify blood bag to blood tag.
 - Patient's name, DOB, MRN
 - Product type
 - Unit number and product code
 - ABO/Rh type
 - Expiration date and time
 - Interpretation of crossmatch results, if performed
 - Special requirements, if any
- ✓ 2-person verification completed/documented in EMR.



Why? It is critical for patient safety to ensure the correct patient is matched with the correct blood product.

During blood administration:

- ✓ Confirm the correct setup with 0.9% normal saline and the blood administration set with a filter (unless transfusing granulocytes).
 - **Why?** Normal saline is approved by the FDA for blood transfusion. Filters remove any clots or debris from the blood product during administration.
 - **Note:** Separate infusion sets should be used for different types of blood components. Fresh tubing should be used for each platelet unit to maintain platelet function and lower the risk of bacterial contamination. Up to 2 units of PRBCs can be used on the same tubing if administration is complete within 4 hours of the original issue time.



DO NOT SPIKE THE BAG BEFORE VERIFICATION.



If using a blood warmer, be aware that **not all blood products are compatible**, such as platelets, cryoprecipitate, and granulocytes. Check manufacturer instructions.

- **Why?** Certain blood products should not be warmed because it can cause changes in function, potentially making them less effective or harmful.

Blood administration Continued:

- ✓ Vital signs completed pre-transfusion (within 1 hour), 15 minutes after blood enters the vein, and post-transfusion (within 30 minutes)
- ✓ Transfuse using the appropriate rate considering patient (adult vs peds) and situation/condition. See [13012 attachments](#) for Transfusion Rate Tables.
- ✓ Required documentation in EMR flowsheet
 - Dual verification signoff by transfusionist and 2nd licensed personnel.
 - Transfusion start and end date/time
 - Volume infused
 - Vital signs
 - Transfusion reactions (yes/no)
 - Blood warmer usage, if applicable
- ✓ Completed within 4 hours of issue.
 - **Why?** FDA requirement. There is an increased risk of bacterial growth at room temperature.
- ✓ Retain all identification attached to the blood product until transfusion stopped/complete.
- ✓ Retain the blood product bag during the observation period, as applicable. Discard appropriately.
- ✓ Place Unit Crossmatch and Transfusion tag into HIM bin for scanning.

If a transfusion reaction is suspected:

- ✓ **Immediately stop the transfusion.**
- ✓ Disconnect the transfusion from the patient while maintaining the IV line with normal saline to keep the vein open.

Why? This is a critical step in preventing further harm to the patient and prepare for supportive care based on the type of reaction.

- ✓ Notify transfusion services immediately (4-2585) and provider.
- ✓ Verify patient ID to blood bag and transfusion record tag again.
- ✓ Monitor and document patient signs, symptoms, and vitals.
- ✓ Collect, label, and send requested specimens.
- ✓ Complete transfusion reaction form and document in EMR.

Note: The Transfusion Record tag lists the appropriate steps for managing a transfusion reaction for quick reference at the bedside.

Helpful Resources:

[Hospital Policy 13012 - Administration of Blood and Blood Components.](#)

[Hospital Policy 1438 - Refusal to Accept Blood Transfusions.](#)

[Hospital Policy 1411 - Consent to Operation, Procedures, Blood Transfusion and Administration of Anesthetics.](#)

Questions? Please contact the
Transfusion Safety Officer for
more information.

Transfusion Services: [916-724-2585](#)