



IMA TNSB COVID UPDATE

NATIONAL GUIDANCE TO BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICES IN LIGHT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

As we all are aware, COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the novel corona virus, an RNA virus (SARS-CoV-2), whose incubation period ranges from 1-14 days, with an average of about 5 days and the symptoms being mild constitutional ones

with a gradual onset.

Elderly people and those with co-morbidities like DM, HT and immune compromised states more likely to develop a life threatening illness. As the spread of virus is through the droplets from nose, mouth and eyes through fomites, the disease warrants a strict social distancing of about 3 feet or more than a meter.

Although a study has shown the presence of this RNA virus in the plasma or serum of 15% of the ill patients, there remains no occurrence of any transfusion-transmitted respiratory viruses inclusive of SARS and MERS-CoV in the past two decades..

Also, no individual is at risk of contracting COVID-19 through blood transfusion or blood donation process.

As the blood centers are highly dependent on voluntary blood donation from healthy individuals to meet the urgent need of blood and blood components, especially for thalassemics, for people with severe anaemia or severe blood loss due to RTA & PPH, the National Blood Transfusion Council (NBTC) has given the following recommendations for blood donation during this pandemic.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Exclusion of at-risk donors to maintain safety:

Based on the history of exposure, following are the deferral criteria:

- Travel history: Deferred for 28 days after the date of departure from a country with COVID-19 transmission, or travel from areas notified by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

- Contact history: Deferred for 28 days for those with history of close contact or exposure to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 including those under quarantine.

- Confirmed cases: Deferred for 28 days till complete recovery from the disease including radiological and virological clearance.

2. Management of blood collection to ensure adequacy of safety:

A) The blood donation activities may be continued with exact distancing norm, infection control guidelines and biomedical waste disposal rules. IPC protocols as per general public is enough and no need to follow as per medical care facility

- Social distancing at the blood donation site: One meter distance between the individuals and between the blood donation couches is mandatory.
- Strict avoidance of overcrowding, hand shaking and hugging.
- Protocols for maintaining cleanliness of equipment's is mandatory.
- Proper hand washing protocols should be ensured.

B) Infection control measures: Include provision of running water, soap and hand sanitizers, adequate personal protective equipment like ordinary Mask for Donor , Staff, Gloves for staff and color coded dustbins.

- Hand hygiene: Hand washing with soap and water if visibly dirty or soiled with blood or body fluids.
- Hand rubbing with alcohol-based preparations if not visibly soiled.
- Cough etiquette should be followed
- Avoidance of close contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases
- Self defer if unwell or with history of contact with COVID-19 cases.

- Safe disposal of gloves, masks, caps and other soiled material.
- Enhanced environmental cleaning measures to decrease the risk of exposure or if a suspected case is present.

3. Recommendations for Blood collection:

- Recruitment of healthy individuals in a staggered manner to avoid overcrowding and mass gathering.
- Avoidance of camps temporarily in the areas of outbreak.
- Depending on the need for blood, the collection may be supplemented by increasing the recruitment from non-affected areas.

4. Donor Education and Communication: The travel history or contact history with confirmed cases of COVID-19 may be displayed prominently at the blood centre.

- Role of Voluntary Blood Donor Organizations:

The Social distancing measures should be undertaken by the voluntary organizations as per the guidelines.

5. Post Donor Care:

Is initiated if a donor reports with symptoms of Covid 19 within fourteen days of donating blood.,

Or has a post donation illness suspicious of COVID-19.,

Or has been confirmed positive of COVID-19.,

Or if his close contact is tested positive for COVID-19.,

In all the above said circumstances, clinical intervention is required for the donor and he should be referred for further management.

- Guidelines for Blood and Blood components in Post Donor Care:

The unutilized whole blood or blood components from such individuals should be recalled and discarded

Sharing and transfer of screened or otherwise low risk blood and blood components

among the licensed blood centers and facilitated by SBTC is permissible.

- Guidelines of appropriate clinical use of blood and blood components:

The Hospital Transfusion Committee should be empowered to take the appropriate decision and provide guidelines to the treating physician and surgeons for appropriate clinical use of blood and blood products during the outbreak of COVID-19.

6. Haemovigilance: All possible post donation and post transfusion infections should be reported to HvPI of NIB with copies to respective SBTC and state FDA and must be properly investigated.

Ref: NBTC / MOH&FW GOI Guidelines dtd 25.03.2020

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