



You were given a blood transfusion today because your blood count was low. You are now well enough to go home. This sheet explains what to expect and which rare reactions to watch for.

## What is it?

A blood transfusion gives you red blood cells from a carefully matched and tested donor. It raises your blood count and can ease tiredness and breathlessness. Transfusions are very safe. Rarely, a reaction can happen hours or even days afterwards, so it is important to know the warning signs. A transfusion treats the low blood count, not always its cause.

## Looking after yourself at home

- Rest today and build up your activity slowly as your energy returns.
- It is normal to feel a little tired, and some people have mild aches for a day.
- Tell any doctor who treats you in the future that you have had a blood transfusion.
- Keep any paperwork you were given about the transfusion.
- Do not donate blood yourself unless your doctor tells you it is safe.

## Medicines

- Keep taking your usual medicines unless your doctor told you to stop.
- If you were prescribed iron or other tablets, take them as the packet or your doctor instructs.

## Follow-up

- See your family doctor or clinic for a blood test on the date you were given.
- Your doctor will look for the reason your blood count was low and plan further treatment.

## **Come back to the emergency department or call an ambulance straight away if:**

- Fever, shivering or shaking chills
- Trouble breathing, wheezing, or chest tightness
- Swelling of the face, lips or tongue, or an itchy rash spreading over the body
- Dark red or brown urine, or passing much less urine than usual
- Yellowing of the skin or the whites of the eyes
- Severe pain in your back, chest or tummy
- Black stools or signs of new bleeding



Scan to read this sheet on your phone

This leaflet is general information to support the advice your doctor or nurse gave you today. It does not replace their advice. If you are worried, seek medical help.

EM Orbit · Emergency medicine, in one orbit · blood-transfusion-en