



CBCSF Newsletter

Issue 10, February 2007

A Publication of Community Blood Centers of South Florida Inc.

Donor Centers

Call for Directions
and Appointments
(Walk-ins Welcome)

Boca Raton
(561) 451-4389

Cooper City
(954) 680-9410

Coral Gables
(305) 665-0199

Coral Springs
(954) 752-6322

Hollywood
(954) 986-6302

Homestead
(305) 245-4757

Kendall
(305) 270-6425

Key West
(305) 294-7668

Lantana
(561) 540-6620

Lauderhill
(954) 777-2653

Miami
(305) 667-6503

Miami Lakes
(305) 362-9713

N. Ft. Lauderdale
(954) 491-9397

Perrine
(305) 256-1660

Sunrise
(954) 747-3921

PRE-REGISTRATION TEST PROGRAM Improving The Donor Interview Process

Introduction

Community Blood Centers of South Florida is beginning a test program to determine if pre-registration of blood donors is as safe as on-site registration. All blood donors will be offered the opportunity to participate in this trial. The basics of ensuring the safety of the blood supply have not changed in 50 years. The first essential steps are properly identifying the prospective donor and then the taking of a detailed donor medical history. Most donors whose units which might transmit diseases such as AIDS or hepatitis are deferred as for the most part donors have proven to be truthful in answering questions about exposure to these diseases. The next layer of safety is highly sophisticated laboratory testing. The combination of proper donor identification, taking an accurate donor medical history and laboratory testing has eliminated most infectious complications of blood transfusion.

Another reason for taking a detailed medical history prior to donation is to eliminate from the blood supply units of blood which might transmit diseases for which there is no currently licensed laboratory test. Malaria and New Variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease, also called MAD COW DISEASE, fall into this category.

The Food and Drug Administration requires that the suitability of a donor be determined by the taking of a medical history on the day of donation and this medical history should be administered in a confidential manner. All blood collected in this country comes from donors who have been asked the medical history questions and no one disputes that the questions properly administered add to the safety of the blood supply.

But is it necessary to ask the questions on the day of the donation? Should repeat donors who have been asked the questions many times in the recent past be asked the same questions again and again every time they donate?

Employers who sponsor blood drives are expected to allow employees to donate on company time which is a drawback associated with cooperating with blood centers. If there were a way to reduce the amount of time employees spend away from their jobs while donating without compromising the safety of the blood supply, the number of employers willing to sponsor blood drives might very likely increase.

Potential blood donors are now able to answer the donor history questions online by participating in the PRE-REGISTRATION TEST PROGRAM by visiting the Community Blood Centers of South Florida's web site at www.cbcfs.org.

The Internet provides most prospective blood donors with a way to register as blood donors, take the medical history questionnaire, and do so from the privacy of their home or office. But demonstrating that no compromise in safety will occur if this method of registering donors and taking their medical histories is used will require the cooperation of a large number of prospective donors over a long time period

(continued on next page)

Remember!

Be sure that we have your e-mail address so you can receive notification that your cholesterol results are available online at www.cbcsof.org

Blood Donors who are on our mailing list will also receive four to five newsletters annually, so be sure to give the registrar your e-mail address when you give blood

Users should also add webmaster@cbcsof.org to their list of safe contacts.

Confidentiality Statement:
Community Blood Centers Of South Florida is committed to respecting your privacy. We will not share, rent or sell personal information provided by you, including your e-mail address, to other parties. The information you provide will only be used to support your relationship with us as a blood donor or potential donor.

Community Blood Centers Of South Florida is a non-profit organization serving donors and patients in Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties.

(800) 357-4483
webmaster@cbcsof.org
<http://www.cbcsof.org>

Beginning in March, 2007 prospective donors to CBCSF will be asked if they wish to help test an alternative method for donor registration and taking of the comprehensive medical history by registering on-line and then repeating the process at the time of donation in conformance with existing federal law. All prospective donors whether they are first time donors or repeat donors will be asked to participate. Participation by a donor is 100% voluntary.

The Internet Alternative

All prospective donors will be asked to pre-register on the Internet up to 120 hours in advance of the blood drive. Registration data and the medical history questions will be asked as if they were preparing to donate at the time of a blood drive. A secure Internet link will be used which is password protected to ensure confidentiality of the data collected.

When a donor who has pre-registered presents at a blood drive, the registration and medical history portions of the donation process will be administered as they always have been. The results of the pre-registration and medical history will be compared to the results of the on-site registration and medical history to determine if there is a significant difference between the two. Should there be a discrepancy, the blood center's Quality Assurance staff will confidentially contact the donor to determine the reason for the discrepancy.

Participation in the study by donors will mean going through the registration and medical history parts of the donation process twice for each donation. The first time is the pre-registration which can occur up to 120 hours prior to the actual donation. The second time is at the time of donation itself.

What the Study Might Mean

There is no data available to show whether or not donors will be as truthful at the time of pre-registration as they are at the time of the actual donation. If this study shows that pre-registration up to 120 hours in advance of the actual donation is as safe as on site registration then the Food and Drug Administration might be willing to allow routine pre-registration for donors. This would significantly decrease the time prospective donors have to spend actually on site donating and away from work or school.

Pre-registration will be a major improvement for apheresis donors who donate regularly and who are asked the same medical history questions over and over again. First time donors will benefit as well because they will have access at the time of pre-registration to the donor information book and will not be under any time constraints to read and understand the materials. Questions which a prospective donor doesn't understand can be addressed at the time of donation so pre-registration might well improve the accuracy of the medical history questionnaire. And as always donor participation in this community's blood program is entirely voluntary and donor confidentiality will be maintained as it always has been.

The Internet is transforming the lives of everyone who uses it and there is no reason to believe that a prospective donor be less truthful at the time of pre-registration than at the time of donation. But the only way to find out is to ask for the help of all blood donors and actually see what happens. It may well be that the donation process can safely be changed and time away from work or school significantly reduced.

Side Bars

1Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 21, Part 640.3, Suitability of Donor, "...the eligibility of a prospective donor will be determined on the day of collection by means of a medical history..."

Definitions:

Pre-Registration - The collection of donor identifiers and the taking of the comprehensive medical history up to 120 hours prior to the actual donation.

On site Registration - Same as above except the data is collected immediately prior to the donation.