

Service: Haematology

Cell Salvage



What is cell salvage?

Cell salvage is a method of collecting blood you have lost during an operation, so that it can be given back to you. The blood collected is washed and filtered to remove any contaminants. This blood can then be given back to you if the doctor thinks a blood transfusion is required. It is sometimes called autologous blood transfusion (using your own blood).

Cell salvage is a technique that is well established in many types of surgery and is regularly used at Southmead Hospital.

Why might I need a transfusion?

It is normal when having major surgery to have some blood loss during the procedure. In some cases this can be a large amount and will require the blood to be replaced by giving a blood transfusion. Blood used for these transfusions can either be:

1. A supply of donor blood from volunteers or
2. Your own blood (by using cell salvage blood)

What are the benefits of using cell salvage blood?

Use of cell salvage can reduce the need for a blood transfusion using donor blood, which is in short supply and expensive.

Although the risk associated with receiving a blood transfusion from a donor are low, there are still a very small risk of infections being passed on (1:500,000 for Hepatitis B, 1:30 million for Hepatitis C, 1:5 million for HIV, less than 1:2 million for vCJD). Having your own blood returned to you removes these risks.

Likewise donor blood is stored before transfusion and this affects its properties: for instance, stored blood does not carry oxygen as well. Having your own blood returned to you straight away reduces these problems.

The cell salvage technique is sometimes seen as an acceptable alternative for those who for religious reasons will not accept a blood transfusion using donated blood.

Why isn't it suitable for everyone?

Not all operations result in enough blood loss to enable cell salvage to be used. For some operations cell salvage is not recommended e.g. some bowel surgery.

What does this mean for you?

This leaflet aims to help you make an informed decision on whether you would prefer cell salvage blood should you need a blood transfusion during your operation. If you have any questions about cell salvage, which are not answered by this leaflet please discuss them with your anaesthetist.

For further information about cell salvage visit:

www.transfusionguidelines.org.uk/lcs/index.htm

**PATIENT
APPROVED** 



www.nbt.nhs.uk

If you or the individual you are caring for need support reading this leaflet please ask a member of staff for advice.

© North Bristol NHS Trust. This edition published August 2019. Review due August 2021. NBT003048

Take Part
Be Involved
In research



Research is everyone's business

Learn more about the wide range of research that takes place here every day.

www.nbt.nhs.uk/research



southmeadhospitalcharity.org.uk

Southmead Hospital Charity raises funds for departments and wards throughout the Trust, meaning you can support an area close to your heart