WHY GIVE 2 WHEN 1 WILL DO?

Island Health is participating in **Using Blood Wisely**, a national campaign with a focus on reducing inappropriate red blood cell (RBC) transfusions using evidence-based guidelines.

HOW TO USE BLOOD WISELY: ALTERNATIVES TO BLOOD

- ✓ **Don't** give transfusion if other therapies are effective, e.g. IV iron therapy
- ✓ Don't transfuse RBCs in asymptomatic, non-bleeding patient with Hb > 70 g/L.

KEY PILLARS OF PATIENT BLOOD MANAGEMENT

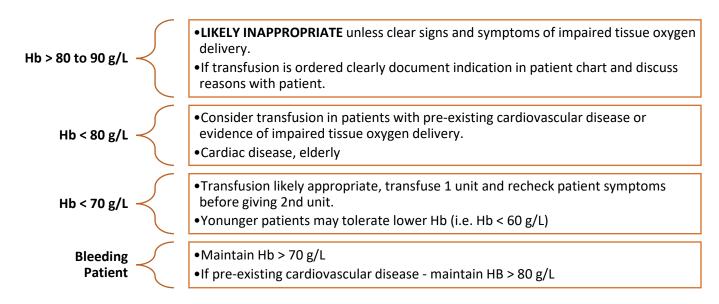
- ✓ Minimize blood loss through:
 - o Appropriate management of anticoagulation prior to surgery.
 - o Only order clinically indicated lab work rather than routine.
 - o Use reduced volume blood collection tubes.
 - o Promptly investigate and treat source of bleeding.
- ✓ Diagnose and treat anemia.
 - o Anemia is defined as Men Hb < 130 g/L and Women Hb < 120 g/L.
 - o Iron deficiency can be present well before iron deficiency anemia is indicated.
 - Treat Iron deficiency first with oral iron therapy where appropriate. Typically takes 12 weeks+ to restore hemoglobin and iron stores – iron response can be predicted as early as two weeks after starting oral iron therapy to guide decision making.

TRANSFUSION RISKS TO PATIENTS

- ✓ Transfusion associated circulatory overload.
- ✓ Transfusion-related acute lung injury.
- ✓ Acute hemolytic transfusion reactions.
- ✓ RBC alloantibodies.
- ✓ Delayed hemolytic transfusion reactions.
- ✓ Anaphylaxis.

GIVE ONE UNIT & REASSESS

- ✓ Transfuse one unit at a time over 2 to 4 hours.
- ✓ For patients > 65 years, impaired cardiac or renal function, use slower rate and furosemide IV pre-transfusion.
- ✓ Assess the outcome (clinical, Hb) before transfusing further.
- ✓ Each unit increases Hb ~ 10 g/L in non-bleeding patient.



To learn more visit the Choosing Wisely page on the Medical Staff website

For more information on transfusion guidelines at Island Health, visit the Transfusion Medicine Intranet Page *Island Health login required*

- Best Practice Decision Support for RBC Transfusion
- Pre-Operative Transfusion Medicine Recommendations