

Blood Transfusion And Outcomes

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Blood / Hematology

Conferences

An exhaustive review and analysis of the medical literature by a panel of experts at the International Consensus Conference on Transfusion and Outcomes (ICCTO) held this month in Phoenix concluded that there is little evidence to support a beneficial effect from the greatest number of transfusions currently being given to patients. The vast majority of studies show an association between red blood cell transfusions and higher rates of complications such as [heart attack](#), [stroke](#), lung injury, infection and kidney failure and death.

The ICCTO conference brought together leading international physicians and scientists in the fields of anesthesiology, intensive care, hematology, oncology, surgery, and patient blood management, and was monitored by the Food and Drug Administration, the American and the Australian Red Cross, the Joint Commission, along with government health officials, and other organizations.

"The results of the conference firmly establish the view that, rather than being a benign procedure, blood transfusion is associated with increased risk of medical complications," said Aryeh Shander, M.D., Chief of the Department of Anesthesiology, Critical Care Medicine, Pain Management and Hyperbaric Medicine at Englewood Hospital and Medical Center in Englewood, NJ and a founding member of the Society for the Advancement of Blood Management (SABM). "The evidence tells us to restrict the practice of transfusion and to avoid unnecessarily transplanting stored blood that could harm a patient's recovery."

About ICCTO:

Safety concerns with blood initially came to the public's awareness with the realization that infectious agents such as [HIV](#) could be transmitted via blood transfusion. Careful screening and testing have resulted in the risk of known infectious agents being transmitted via blood being reduced to extremely low levels. Since then, concern has emerged amongst many in the medical profession that transfusion itself may be a risk factor for adverse patient outcomes. It has been known for some time that blood undergoes many physical and chemical changes during storage, losing its ability to supply oxygen to vital organs and triggering inflammatory and immune reactions when transfused. It is now thought by some that these storage-related problems may result in negative outcomes to patients.

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ICCTO was convened by two professional medical societies, the USA based Society for the Advancement of Blood