



AT THE FOREFRONT
UChicago
Medicine

TO: Medical Staff, House Staff, Nursing Staff, Patient Care Centers and Outpatient Clinics

FROM: Gunta Musa, MHA, MT(ASCP)SBB
Technical Director, Blood Bank

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Medical Director, Section of Transfusion, Hemostasis, and Apheresis Medicine

DATE: 10/24/2022

RE: Shortage of group O Negative Red Blood Cells

Group O negative red blood cells (RBC) supplies are significantly low nationally.

O neg RBC units are used at UCM for pediatric and female trauma/MTP patients (as emergency release blood). Due to compatibility issues, patients with sickle cell disease often require O neg RBC units as well.

Our blood suppliers have asked us to **take immediate action** to reduce O neg utilization due to anticipated shortfalls in supply.

UChicago Medicine Blood Bank is centralizing a portion of our remote stored O neg inventory to maximize utilization and efficiency of our available inventory. Affected locations have been notified of these changes.

Continuous adult MTP for women of childbearing potential is being modified as follows:

- Up to 2 MTP O neg packs will be issued from Blood Bank.
- If additional MTP packs are needed, adult women will be switched to O pos MTP packs unless UCM Blood Bank has completed a blood type for the patient, and she is RhD neg.

We are asking for your help to maintain UChicago Medicine's Blood Bank inventory by doing the following:

- Limit transfusions to those patients most in need.
- Only use remote stored O neg emergency release RBC units if the patient is actively hemorrhaging or experiencing significant end-organ hypoxic damage. Waiting to receive blood from the blood bank in situations less critical than above will help us better manage our O neg inventory.
- Collect Type & screen and ABO verification samples upon identifying a patient in imminent need of transfusion, and immediately upon starting an MTP or using emergency release blood.
- Donate blood at the UCM Blood Donation Center, particularly if you are group O neg.

We urge you to talk with your teams and colleagues and make them aware of the important need to donate at this time. In other critical shortage periods, we have been able to maintain our blood supply with many thanks to the overwhelming generosity of regular and first-time donors.

Key points if you are considering donating red blood cells or platelets:

- The Blood Donation Center (BDC) is located in DCAM 2E, just before the Sky Bridge to the Center for Care and Discovery.
- BDC is open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.
- Please eat a full meal and drink plenty of water prior to donating.
- Donating platelets can take longer than regular blood donation and averages about 90 minutes for collection. Please talk to your supervisor or manager about arranging time for platelet donations.
- To schedule an appointment today, call 773-702-6247 or email DonorServices@uchospitals.edu.
- If we are unable to accommodate your request for an immediate donation appointment, please schedule a future donation appointment. Your donation is always valuable!
- If you're hesitant about donating, go to the Blood Donation Center on our website for more details.

Thank you for helping us to meet the needs of our patients.

For questions, please contact

- Gunta Musa, Manager, at 773-702-1438.
- Geoffrey Wool, MD PhD, Medical Director, at 773-926-1455.