

Terminology Guide when Completing the Advanced Directive Healthcare Supplemental Form

Albumin

Albumin is a protein made in the liver and distributed through the body by the circulatory system. It assists in maintaining enough volume inside the blood vessels. Albumin is one of the many proteins found in plasma. It is prepared for medical use by fractionating it from the plasma of healthy donors, and then heating it to inactivate any disease causing agents.

Erythropoietin

Erythropoietin is a synthetic human protein normally produced in the kidneys. Its function is to increase red blood cell production by the body. Once you begin receiving it, your body can take 2-4 weeks to improve blood cell production. You may hear it being called by its brand names: Epogen, Procrit, or Epo.

Immune globulins

Immune Globulins are various proteins that act as antibodies to infection. They are fractionated from plasma of healthy human donors. For example, most are familiar with RhoGAM, given to mother's whose blood is incompatible with their babies.

Clotting Factors

Clotting Factors are 13 Substances produced mostly by the liver. Each acts as one step in the process of clotting the blood. Only Factors VII, VIII, and IX are available synthetically. It would be rare to need this in most people, but some have undetected clotting problems, such as hemophiliacs.

Tissue Adhesives/ Cryoprecipitate

Tissue Adhesives are used rarely, but topically in some types of surgery (e.g., spinal surgery) to reduce surface bleeding . They incorporate a mix of proteins and substances fractionated from plasma of multiple healthy donors.

Dialysis Equipment (non-blood primed)

This equipment is used during a medical procedure which removes certain elements from the blood when your kidneys are not functioning properly. Using dialysis can help to support your kidneys and clean your blood supply.

Heart Lung Equipment (non-blood primed)

During open heart surgery, this machine may be utilized to take over the functions of the heart and lungs. One part of the machine takes blood out of the body; while another part of the machine oxygenates and returns that oxygenated blood to your body.

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Hemodilution (Normovolemic Hemodilution)

Normovolemic (normal volume) Hemodilution (blood dilution) is a process that reduces the amount of blood cells lost during surgery. This is how it works: before surgery ever starts, the surgeon, the anesthesiologist, and other personnel discuss and carefully plan the surgery and blood management. Just before the surgeon begins, an anesthesiologist starts an IV in a vein in the arm. Blood is slowly drained inside a closed system. This blood volume is simultaneously replaced with intravenous fluid (a combination of water and minerals), so that the amount of liquid in the blood vessels remains constant. This consistency in volume maintains the patient's vital Sign stability. While this process is going on, surgery starts. Inevitably, some blood is lost in the process of surgery. However, Since this blood has been diluted, the blood is "thin" or has fewer cells and more liquid (red cells are what physicians normally transfuse the most). In time, the anesthesiologist returns the blood that was removed and has the ability to give back to the patient fresh, whole, cell-rich blood. There is no chance of clerical error as the blood is never stored, and never leaves a closed system which is in constant contact with the patient's own Circulatory system. Many people who refuse transfusions for religious reasons find hemodilution acceptable, since they view it as an extension of their own Circulatory system.

Hypervolemic Hemodilution

This is a method used during surgery to dilute the blood before it is lost by giving the patient additional fluids to help maintain a consistent blood volume in the body.

Cell Saver (Intraoperative Cell Salvage)

Most commonly known as a "cell-saver", the intraoperative cell salvage machine recovers blood lost from the operative area, spins it, washes it, filters it, and returns the patient's own red blood cells back to his or her body. The machine is used mostly in major surgeries such as hip and knee replacements, large gynecological surgery, prostate surgery, and vascular surgery.

Organ Donation/Transplant

This is the transfer of an organ or tissue from an organ donor to a recipient to replace a diseased or damaged organ/tissue.

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Additional Terms

Anemia

Anemia is a low red blood cell or hemoglobin count. Red blood cells are the blood components that carry oxygen throughout the body. Since oxygen keeps your cells alive and functioning, a sufficient supply of red blood cells is vital to life.

Advance Directive/ Medical Directive

A written directive an individual prepares stating what kind of medical care he or she wishes to receive in the event the individual lacks the decision-making capacity to make a particular health care decision, and which may also appoint a person to make health care decisions on behalf of the individual, consistent with the individual's stated wishes. This certified legal document may be called an "Instruction Directive"; the appointment of a decision-maker may be called (:) a "Health Care Proxy" or "Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care." See Hospital's Advance Directive Policy) the advance directive details a patient's choices regarding medical care and end-of-life decisions.

Hematopoietic Agents

Iron supplements and other medication, such as erythropoietin can be given for several weeks prior to surgery to stimulate the production of red blood cells. These same agents can be used after surgery, if needed, to rebuild the red blood cell count.

Hemostatic Agents

Drugs that promote clotting of the blood.

Informed Consent

The absolute legal right to choose or refuse medical treatments that have been explained to you by your physician, this includes the right to refuse the use of blood once your physician has explained the risks, benefits and alternatives. It also protects the physician from liability since the document is your sworn statement that you are aware of the risks of refusing possible life-saving treatment.

Proxy / Health Care Proxy (see Advance Directive)

Volume expanders Non-blood fluids used to enhance circulation