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Back cover

**Where can donors obtain further information on AIDS?**

Donors can discuss in confidence whether to give blood, with the doctor on the blood collection session, their own doctor or the Director of their local Blood Transfusion Centre. Donors in high risk categories can get further information from their local Sexually Transmitted Diseases Clinic (Special Clinic).

**Please remember, AIDS is a rare disease but a serious one.**

Front cover

# A.I.D.S.

**And how it concerns blood donors**

**National Blood Transfusion Service  
1984**

Since AIDS may be transmitted by transfusion of blood and blood products, the National Blood Transfusion Service wants blood donors to have the facts about the disease.

### What is AIDS?

AIDS is short for **Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome**, a rare disease that has been recognised only recently. It is a serious disease which depresses the body's normal resistance to infections and other illnesses. AIDS is probably caused by a virus.

### Who is at risk from AIDS?

If AIDS is caused by a virus it does not seem to be transmitted by ordinary day to day contact. However, there is evidence that certain groups of people appear to be most at risk; these are:

1. Practising homosexual men.
2. Drug abusers, both men and women, who inject drugs.
3. Sexual contacts of people in the two groups above or of people suffering from AIDS.

AIDS has also occurred in a small number of haemophiliac patients who are treated with components derived from blood donations.

### Has AIDS occurred in the United Kingdom?

Yes. Although only 81 cases had been reported in the UK by the end of October 1984 compared with 6,182 in the USA, it is expected that more cases will be reported. A very close watch is being kept on the situation.

### Can AIDS be transmitted by transfusion of blood and blood products?

Almost certainly yes, but there is only the most remote chance of this happening with ordinary blood transfusions given in hospital.

### How can the risks be reduced?

The National Blood Transfusion Service has a very high regard for donors as extremely responsible people who give blood for the benefit of others and is confident that they would not knowingly put patients at risk from such a serious disease as AIDS. Until there is a reliable screening test the Blood Transfusion Service can use, and until more is known about the disease, **donors are asked not to give blood if they think they have the disease or are in one of the risk groups listed opposite.**

### Can blood donors get AIDS by donating blood?

No. There are no diseases contracted from giving blood. All the materials used for collecting blood are sterile and are used only once.