

3296

**REMEMBER,
AIDS IS A SERIOUS DISEASE**

Please do **not** give blood

- if you are a practising homosexual or bisexual man
- if you are a drug abuser who injects drugs
- if you are a sexual contact of any of these people

We know that all donors are responsible people who give blood for the benefit of others and we thank you for your continuing help.

A.I.D.S.

**IMPORTANT
NEW ADVICE
FOR
BLOOD
DONORS**

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 caused by a virus. But it does not seem to be transmitted by ordinary day-to-day contact.

WHO IS AT RISK FROM AIDS?

1. Practising homosexual and bisexual men.
2. Drug abusers, both men and women, who inject drugs.
3. Sexual contacts of people in these groups.

AIDS has also occurred in a small number of haemophilic patients who are treated with blood products.

There is evidence that some people who have lived in Haiti or Central Africa, particularly Zaire and Chad, may be at risk from AIDS.

HOW CAN THE RISKS TO OTHERS BE REDUCED?

Donors in the risk groups must **not** give blood. Some people in these groups may unknowingly carry the AIDS virus in their bodies.

CAN PATIENTS GET AIDS BY TRANSFUSION OF BLOOD?

Yes, but there is only a remote chance of this happening with ordinary blood transfusions given in hospital.

CAN PATIENTS GET AIDS BY TRANSFUSION OF BLOOD PRODUCTS?

Yes. A very small number of patients suffering from haemophilia, an illness in which the blood will not clot, have developed AIDS. Haemophiliacs are more susceptible to AIDS because they need regular injections of a product called Factor VIII. This is made from plasma obtained from many donors. If even one of the donors has AIDS virus, then the Factor VIII would transmit the disease.

CAN BLOOD DONORS GET AIDS BY DONATING BLOOD?

No. Neither AIDS nor any other disease can be contracted from giving blood. All the materials used for collecting blood are sterile and are used only once.

WHERE CAN DONORS GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AIDS?

Donors can discuss in confidence whether to give blood

- with a doctor at the blood collection session
 - with their own doctor
 - with the Director of their Blood Transfusion Centre
 - at any Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Clinic.
- To find your nearest clinic look in the phone book under VD Clinics (Venereal Diseases).

There is also a leaflet 'Some Facts About AIDS' available from your local Health Education Unit. The address is in the phone book under local Health Authority.