

30/6/83

## AIDS

### GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING BLOOD AND BLOOD PRODUCTS

#### General Principles:

There is no diagnostic test for AIDS at present and therefore no way of detecting potential carriers.

It is important that everyone handling blood packs and needles always take the utmost care not to contaminate themselves or others.

Remember unless contamination occurs with skin penetration, ingestion or splashes into eyes, the risks of getting infection are negligible.

The golden rule is NEVER BE CARELESS WHEN DEALING WITH BLOOD AND NEEDLES

#### High Risk Groups for AIDS:

1. Men with multiple male partners
2. Intravenous drug abusers
3. Haitian immigrants to USA
4. Haemophiliacs
5. Recipients of contaminated blood products
6. Sexual contacts of any of the above groups

We are asking these people in high risk groups to refrain from volunteering to give blood.

It is possible some will still come to give blood. The following policy is therefore advised.

1. No blood donor is to be turned away merely on 'suspicion' that they are in a high risk group.
2. Any donor considered potentially in a high risk group should be asked about their general health when at Hb's.
3. The donor attendant should ask the questions:-
  - (a) Are you in good health?
  - (b) Have you had repeated infections recently?  
(someone having a cold etc recently is not to be deferred.  
It is repeated infections that are a problem.
  - (c) Have you had any recent weight loss or night sweats? Anyone giving a recent history of ill health should be deferred because of ill health.
4. It is important not to treat donors who appear 'suspicious' differently from any other donor. You are likely to be WRONG in your suspicions and could cause a lot of distress to a donor.

THEREFORE DO NOT ACT ANY DIFFERENTLY FROM NORMAL ON SUSPICION ALONE

- 2 -

5. If anyone is definitely in a high risk group then the donation should be treated as follows:-
- (i) Label the pack and laboratory sheet.  
? Infective. Not for transfusion
  - (ii) Place the pack in foil. Wrap well. Secure with autoclave tape. Mark 'to be autoclaved'. Place in a plastic bag clearly marked 'Take to wash-up for special disposal'. Send back to centre.
6. If there is any doubt about the suitability of a pack for transfusion etc, the sister in charge of the session should refer to the Donor Consultant for advice.

*June Smith*  
*30/6/83*