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## Blood donor warning to AIDS risk groups

By DAVID FLETCHER Health Services Correspondent

PEOPLE who think they may be suffering or at risk from the fatal disease known as AIDS are being asked not to be blood donors.

The Health Department has sent a leaflet to blood donation centres explaining that AIDS, short for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, may be transmitted through infected blood used for transfusions.

The three groups are homosexual men who have many different partners; drug addicts, male and female, using injections; and sexual partners of people suffering from AIDS.

However the Department said yesterday that there was no

question of asking potential donors about their sexual lives.

Mr Kenneth Clarke, Health Minister, said there was no conclusive proof that AIDS was transmitted in blood or blood products.

He added: "we must continue to minimise any possible risk of transmission of the disease by blood donation, but it is not possible to test a person's blood for the presence of AIDS."

"The best measure which can be taken at the present time is to ask people who think they may have AIDS or be at risk from it to refrain from giving blood."

AIDS attacks its victims by destroying their immune system, leaving them defenceless against a number of infections which can prove fatal.

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## Government asks victims of Aids not to give blood

By Pearce Wright, Science Editor

The Department of Health and Social Security is appealing to people who believe they are suffering from, or may be at risk from, the mysterious disease known as Aids not to give blood to the transfusion service.

The request is made in a leaflet for distribution to blood donation centres. It comes after concern about incidents in the United States in which contaminated blood products have been attributed to donors suffering from Aids (Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome).

Those most at risk from Aids are homosexual men with more than one partner, drug addicts who inject themselves, and sexual contacts of people suffering from the disease.

Announcing publication of the leaflet, Mr Kenneth Clarke, Minister for Health, said: "It has been suggested that Aids may be transmitted in blood and blood products. There is no conclusive proof that this is so.

"Nevertheless I can appreciate the concern that this suggestion may cause. We must continue to minimize any possible risk of transmission of the disease by blood donation, but it is not possible to test a person's blood for the presence of Aids.

"The best measure which can be taken is to ask people who think they have Aids, or may be at risk from it, to refrain from giving blood."

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2/9 **'No blood' appeal  
to AIDS suspects**

Health Minister Kenneth Clark yesterday appealed to people who think they may be suffering or be at risk from the fatal disease known as AIDS not to give blood. There have been five deaths from AIDS in Britain.

People thought to be at risk are homosexual men with multiple partners, drug addicts who inject themselves, and sexual contacts of people suffering AIDS.

The request to them not to donate blood is contained in a leaflet published yesterday by the DHSS for distribution to blood centres. Its preparation follows concern that AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) may be transmitted in blood.