

NATIONAL BLOOD



TRANSFUSION SERVICE

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

Director:

Dr. F. A. Ala, A.B.(HARVARD), M.B.Ch.B., F.R.C.P.

REGIONAL BLOOD  
TRANSFUSION CENTRE  
VINCENT DRIVE, EDGBASTON  
BIRMINGHAM B15 2SG

All correspondence should be addressed to the Director.

Tel. 021-472 3111

Our Ref. FAA/MP

Your Ref.

19th January 1987

Mr. Charles Cox,  
Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist,  
New Cross Hospital,  
Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV10 0QP

Dear Mr. Cox,

Thank you for your letter of 5th January 1987. As you can imagine, we have had quite a lot of similar requests recently!

First of all, the risks of contracting HIV infection through transfusion are genuinely small. We have screened some 295,000 donations so far and three HIV positive donors have been found. Two of these were new donors who normally reside elsewhere. The incidence of HIV antibody amongst blood donors in this Region is 0.001% - one of the lowest in the world.

One cannot be complacent, of course: there is evidence that infection is spreading beyond the risk groups in a number of European countries; there is a sero-negative 'window' of undetectable infectivity, and, finally, there are other mutants such as HIV 2 entering the community which we cannot yet detect. Nevertheless, transfusion remains very safe.

Secondly, even though 'designated' donation is really no safer, there can be little doubt that autologous donation is, and that is not merely because of HIV.

Pre-deposit of autologous blood is certainly feasible in the second trimester of an uncomplicated pregnancy. There is some evidence that the first and <sup>3rd</sup> trimesters should be avoided. If the lady insists and you decide that you wish to proceed with this approach, perhaps you would let me know. Storing liquid blood for 35 or even 42 days is not a major problem. Storing it for longer in liquid nitrogen, however, is costly and there is always the danger of losing a unit if the bag splits.

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19th January 1987

How near to delivery is the lady?

I look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

DR. F. A. ALA  
Director

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CC/LMS



## Wolverhampton Health Authority

5th January, 1987.

New Cross Hospital  
Wolverhampton  
WV10 0QP

Telephone No. 732255

Any enquiries please contact

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Dr. F. A. Ala,  
Director of Regional Blood  
Transfusion Centre, N. B. T. S.,  
Vincent Drive,  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham B15 2SG.

Dear Dr. Ala,

A patient has requested that blood be taken from her before delivery in case of the need of transfusion. Failing this she would like her husband to donate blood for her.

I have told her that I think this course of action is not really possible at present but I did promise to write to you for advice. Her concern is of the risk of AIDS, needless to say!

I am sorry to bother you with a query such as this.

Best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,

GRO-C

CHARLES COX,  
Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist.