



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY
HANNIBAL HOUSE Room No. 1025a
ELEPHANT AND CASTLE LONDON SE1 6TE
TELEX 883669 TELEPHONE 01-703 6380 EXT 3487
GTN (2916)

Your reference

Our reference AS/ACT

Mrs GRO-A

GRO-A

LONDON

GRO-A

23 December 1985

Dear Mr GRO A

AIDS

Thank you for your letter of the 29 November to the Chief Medical Officer on whose behalf I am replying.

The anti-D protective injection is one of a number of specific immunoglobulins which are obtained from ~~volunteer~~ ^{volunteer} donors who have high levels of the immunoglobulin either because they have become sensitised through pregnancy or because they have volunteered to be immunised to develop these high levels.

The process used to obtain anti-D and all the other intramuscular immunoglobulins from plasma involves agents which are known to inactivate the AIDS virus.

The World Health Organisation who looked at the question of the safety of immunoglobulins with regard to the virus which is the causal agent of AIDS in both 1983 and 1984 have been satisfied that there is no epidemiological evidence that the use of immunoglobulins transmits AIDS. This view was based on the lack of any evidence of cases of AIDS associated with immunoglobulin despite the use of many millions of doses of immunoglobulin.

All the anti-D immunoglobulin used in this country is collected from volunteer donors in the UK. As you will know from Government announcements all donations are now screened to detect any evidence of infection by the AIDS virus. The very small risk of any donation

being contaminated by the AIDS virus is therefore now even less likely.

I hope you will find this helpful.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

Dr Alison Smithies
Principal Medical
Officer

Dr. Smithies
 RECEIVED IN CENTRAL
 -4 DEC 1985
 SECRETARIAT
 GRO A
 GRO-A
 London
 Done 29 November 1985
 cc Mr Murray

Dear Dr. Acheson,
 Re: AIDS

ACKNOWLEDGED

I would like to know whether your department has any advice or information on the possibility of contracting AIDS from Anti-D injections. The consultant haematologist at the hospital where I receive antenatal care says there is no evidence of this but I do not find that convincing.
 Anti-D is prepared in a similar

way to Factor VIII. Factor VIII is
now treated to prevent HIV
virus from being transmitted,
is Anti-D? Alternatively is
anti-D tested for the presence
of the virus?

I am surprised that I have
never seen any discussion of
Anti-D and Aids in newspapers
or, say, New Scientist. It seems
to me that all blood products
must be presumed guilty until
proven innocent.

I look forward to hearing
from you.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C