

# Blood Line

The Voluntary Blood Donation Journal

Promoting  
Voluntary  
Blood Donation

2012 | 25

## DONOR SCREENING - THE STEPPING STONE TO BLOOD SAFETY



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**T**ransfusion is often a lifesaving treatment and is needed across the spectrum of patient care especially for surgery, patients on cancer therapy or recovering from trauma. Food and drug administration (FDA) has not yet approved or licensed for human use pharmaceutical products that could perform the oxygenation and haemostatic functions of blood. So the blood supply depends entirely on voluntary donations by healthy donors or to a lesser extent, autologous donations by qualified patients.

Two particularly important determinants of feasible and successful transfusion therapy are blood availability and safety. Availability is affected by a complex interplay of factors. The number of annual donations and regulations that affect donor qualification criteria are the most significant. It is estimated that fewer than 5% potentially eligible individuals donate. Data the National Blood Data

Resources Center (NBDRC) of AABB demonstrate that transfusion of Whole blood between 1999 and 2001 increased by 15% while collection increased only by 6%.

Donor eligibility has been affected by a growing body of standard regulations and guidance documents that are intended to diminish the risks of both known transfusion transmitted infections and theoretical ones also. This has resulted in the deferral of many potential donors and the loss of long term frequent donors. Increased blood usage, blood type inventory imbalances and even labour actions or weather pattern both of which affect the transport of blood can affect local and national supplies.

The good news is that blood safety has improved by orders of magnitude in the past 15 years. In the mid 1980s, direct questioning of donors about risk factors of HIV virus and hepatitis has reduced transfusion transmission of these infections. The implementation of extremely sensitive tests for serologic and or nucleic acid test (NAT) for evidence of HIV types 1 & 2, Hepatitis B & C, syphilis human-T cell lymphotropic virus (HTLV 1/2) and West Nile Virus NAT testing have a huge and welcome impact on blood safety. This improvement in blood safety has resulted in obvious health benefits but also been associated with increases in the costs of processing and testing units.

Traditionally blood centers handle donor

recruitment, screening, collection of WB or apheresis products, serologic and infectious disease marker testing, preparation of component, storage and transport. In addition some community blood centers provide highly specialized services as HLA (Human Leukocyte Antigen) testing, reference laboratory services for antibody identification problems, cross matching for out hospital transfusions and hospital transfusions and educational training for health practitioners and public and serve as a general resource on blood related issues.

Hospital transfusion service is closest to the patient care arena in that it performs compatibility testing, resolves patient antibody problems, carries out final product preparation, issues units for transfusion, investigates transfusion complications or reactions. Transfusion services also engage in certain types of processing such as irradiation, leukofiltration and even testing of platelet components for bacterial infections.

Although the major purpose of regulations and standards is to ensure the highest possible level of safety, there are two overarching factors necessary for manufacturing a safe and efficacious blood product. One is thorough and accurate pre donation qualification (screening of blood donors). Secondly performing of serologic and IDM (Infectious Disease Marker) testing of all donations. Blood collection and transfusion activities in

US are monitored and regulated by several entities - AABB (American Association of Blood Banks), CAP (College of American Pathology), JCAHO (Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Organization ).

Blood centers and transfusion services must have written SOPs for operational, regulatory and some administrative activities. These are necessary in order to maintain consistency and ensure conformance with applicable regulations and standards. The approach to blood safety is multi tiered. A major pillar of safety is donor qualification. One reason for screening donors is to identify health , travel, medications, or infectious diseases risks that could expose the recipients to infections or teratogenic substances.

There are several mechanisms to maximize blood safety they include unpaid

voluntary donors, donor education, pre-donation screening, medical evaluation, confidential unit exclusion, post donation callback instructions, infectious disease marker testing etc

The donor screening process has five major components:-

1. Registration of the donor at which time demographic information is obtained
2. Presentation of predonation educational materials to donor
3. A process to solicit information about medication, travel ,medical and social history
4. Physical evaluation
5. Screening donor blood for transfusion transmitted infections

Donors who meet predonation screening qualification undergo a focussed physical evaluation including general appearance, haemoglobin estimation,

pulse, blood pressure, temperature, donor weight, inspection of venepuncture site etc. If prospective donor has successfully passed pre donation screening and physical evaluation the final step before donation is to provide written consent to donate. Predonation screening is considered by FDA as a pillar of blood safety along with deferral registries, laboratory assays, product quarantine, investigation of problems and correction. Preliminary questions may prevent the collection of unsafe blood especially when assays for donor testing are not available or when the donor is in the window period .

The FDA also consider donor screening as a means of protecting blood center personnel from potential exposures to infectious blood and a way to avert collection of infectious products that could fail lab testing or escape inventory controls.

## NATIONAL BLOOD DONATION DAY INAUGURAL CEREMONY



Adv. K Chandrika  
Honorable Mayor  
Trivandrum



Mr. Yoshihiro Kimura  
Chairman, TERUMO  
PENPOL Limited



Mr. C Balagopal,  
Managing Director  
TERUMO PENPOL  
Limited



Mr. Sunil Jose  
Head, Infosys  
Development Center  
Trivandrum



Mr. Ajith S Nair  
Sr. Account Quality  
Manager, Infosys  
Development Center  
Trivandrum

## BLOOD DONATION CAMP ORGANIZED AT TECHNO PARK BY SANJEEVANI, EMPLOYEE DRIVEN CSR WING OF INFOSYS



### Panel discussion on Voluntary Blood Donation Organized on National Blood Donation Day By TERUMO PENPOL Limited and Infosys



Dr. K C Usha , HOD of MCH Blood Bank, Dr. K Vijayalakshmi, HOD of RCC Blood Bank and Dr. P V Sulochana, BTO of SCTIMST participated in the Panel Discussion. Mr. R Narayanan, Ex-Vice President, Learning and Development of TCS was the Moderator.



Dr. K C Usha, HOD,  
MCH Blood Bank



Dr. K Vijayalakshmi, HOD,  
RCC Blood Bank



Dr. P V Sulochana, BTO,  
SCTIMST Blood Bank

# NATIONAL BLOOD DONATION DAY CELEBRATION ORGANIZED BY TERUMO PENPOL LIMITED AND INFOSYS LIMITED ON OCTOBER 1, 2012

## *Terumo Penpol and Infosys joined hands for the promotion of voluntary blood donation on National Blood Donation Day*

Park Centre, Technopark played host to the National Blood Donation Day events held by Infosys in association with Terumo Penpol. The venue was jam-packed with students and employees of Technopark and the mega blood donation camp that was organised as part of the event saw huge participation. Advocate K Chandrika, the Mayor of Trivandrum, inaugurated the event. Mr. Yoshihiro Kimura the Chairman of Terumo Penpol, honoured Cotton Hill Higher Secondary School for organizing blood donation camp and for promoting voluntary blood donation. Yoshihiro Kimura presented a token of appreciation to Cotton Hill Public school for the outstanding contribution of the students towards blood donation by motivating others to participate in voluntary blood donation.

Mr. C. Balagopal, Managing Director of TPL delivered the keynote address and Sunil Jose Head of Infosys Trivandrum, presided over the function. The mayor, in her inaugural address spoke about her experiences as a blood

donor and encouraged students to have the will to voluntarily donate blood.

Mr C Balagopal in his keynote address laid down facts and observations to point out the acute shortage of blood that the country faces, stressed on the need for adequacy of blood and also the importance of ensuring safety of blood by building a pool of blood donors. On a positive note he said, "Studies also show an innate tendency of volunteerism among Indians. It's this tendency that we should make use of and act to reduce the blood shortage that we face."

Trivandrum Head of Infosys, Sunil Jose spoke about the endeavours of the employees of Infosys to promote blood donation as part of their employee-driven programme, Sanjeevani

A panel discussion on the shortage of blood was also conducted where three eminent doctors, Dr. K C Usha (Medical College Hospital), Dr. Vijayalekshmi (RCC) and Dr. P V Sulochana (Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology) discussed at length about the various issues plaguing the blood dona-

tion field quoting real-life scenarios. They stressed the need for voluntary blood donation and encouraged the audience to carry forward this message. The discussion ended with an interactive session with interesting questions such as the Bombay blood group being raised by the students.

K P Rajagopalan, the General Secretary of All Kerala Blood Donors Society also spoke about the importance of being proactive. "We should be able to foresee the need for blood donors, and make arrangements so that their help can be obtained, should the need arise."

A blood donation camp was held, which saw a lot of people coming forward to donate blood. There were quite a few who were disappointed that they could not donate blood as they were below the required weight.

Slogan and poster making competitions were organised for the students and winners were awarded. The day ended with Beatbox by Teuea Arun and crowd entertainment by RJ Nizaam of Big FM Radio.

## STRESS ON BLOOD DONATION



A noble gesture of mass blood donation project organised by Lions Clubs International, Kozhikode Elite in association with Ultra Tech Cement as part of the Onam-Eid celebration has drawn enthusiastic participation in the city.

About 50-60 staff, retailers of Ultra Tech Cement and members of Lions Club donated

blood at Medical College Hospital Blood Bank in a one-day programme at Hotel Calicut Gate, Ramanatukara.

K.T. Ajith, Multiple Council Chairperson was the chief guest of the function. "We have already conducted many medical camps in various parts of the city but this is the first attempt of blood donation and are interested to expand the horizon of social service more," said K Shaju, President of Lions Club International.

"We are planning to have a link with blood donor's forums in the city and will organise such blood donation camps frequently in the city," he added. "The misconceptions society have over the blood donation as it creates health issues will be removed by organising classes by doctors in the city very soon," he said.

Lions club honoured Neelakantan Namboodri, a National Teacher Award Winner and Keerthana who is a TV artist during the programme.

## Mr. K P Rajagopalan, a regular blood donor sharing his experience



## We thank Big FM Radio for supporting National Blood Donation Day Celebrations



# Letter to the Editor



Thank you very much Baby for sending me the Bloodline issue.

That is very nice of you. The article has come out well. If there is a hard copy of the magazine, I will appreciate it if you will have your Chennai office deliver a few issues to me which I would like to keep in the Donor waiting room.

Once again, thank you very much for all your help.

best wishes,

Dr Jyotsna Codaty  
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My dear Baby,

Thank you for sending the Blood Line journal. The articles are well-written and inspiring.

Good to know that the event on World Blood Donor Day was a big success.

Jolly Joseph  
Managing Director  
Kernox  
Technopark



## R J NIZAM, OF BIG FM RADIO HAVING FUN AND GAMES WITH SCHOOL STUDENTS AS PART OF NATIONAL BLOOD DONATION DAY CELEBRATIONS



## HONOURING COTTON HILL HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Mr. Yoshihiro Kimura, Chairman, TPL honoured Cotton Hill Higher Secondary School for promoting voluntary blood donation.



Mr. Yoshihiro Kimura, Chairman, TPL with the Students and Teacher of Cotton Hill Higher Secondary School who had organized the Blood Donation Camp at Cotton Hill Higher Secondary School



As part of National Blood Donation Day Celebrations A Flash Mob was performed at Bhavani, Technopark by Associates of Infosys to promote Voluntary Blood Donation

## Winners of various competition receiving the award from Mr Shibu of Infosys



## Teuea Arun performing Beat Box as part of National Blood Donation Day Celebrations



## BLOOD DONATION CATCHING UP

**Courtesy :** Jisha Surya  
The New Indian Express

Blood donation is not an annual exercise conducted by some NGOs, at least for some employees in Technopark. Tejus, a blood donation forum formed by nine like-minded individuals, finds Technopark an ideal location to find blood donors.

In a slow, but steady pace, Tejus is becoming successful in bringing out regular blood donors from Technopark. Interestingly, six out of the nine founders of Tejus are techies. Through its website [tejusindia.com](http://tejusindia.com), the organisation has come to the aid of several people during crisis situations.

Brijesh P I and Anoop K of Gemini Software Solutions, Sujil S of NeST, Ajeesh V R of Wipro, Sanjay Mohan of

Magic Wand Animations, Sabari Gireesan, who is about to launch a company in Technopark, Asnov J B of RMESI, Sharon Vijay, who works in Abu Dhabi, and Ratheesh Sahadevan of VSSC are the torch-bearers of Tejus.

Though formed six years ago, Tejus was formally registered only in November last year. The activities of Tejus include arranging free transportation of interested blood donors from Technopark to RCC and Sri Chitra. During Saturdays and Sundays, the donors are fetched from their houses.

"We collect funds from our volunteers. Formed by a small group, we have around 20 volunteers now. We are conducting blood donation camps every month from November. Last week, we conducted a camp and another camp will be held on Saturday. Our aim is to conduct blood

donations camps every day. Considering the potential of Technopark, I feel RCC must set up a blood bank here on the campus," said Brijesh.

Brijesh and his team have been in touch with companies in Technopark to create awareness among employees on blood donation. "Creating a directory is a tough task these days. People, especially women, will be ready to share their details only if the venture is credible. The activities of Tejus are slowly gaining momentum. More and more companies are showing interest in Tejus," said Brijesh.

"Since November last, we have arranged around 200 blood donations," he said, adding that there have been innumerable donations since the inception of Tejus six years ago.

## ENCOURAGING WOMEN DONORS



People believe that blood is needed only when there are emergencies or national calamities and for routine surgery.

Blood donation is seen as a noble cause but people are afraid to give blood. Generally, men are more inclined to donate blood than women. Women donors are best motivators, but most of them are anemic.

These and more facts were brought out by the students of All Saints' College, under the guidance of their teacher Ms. Mary Mettilda, who did a survey on Barriers To Blood Donation.

"Women are generally scared to donate blood. So, we conduct these camps in the college to encourage the girls.

Many come inspired, but only one of 10 is eligible - others are either underweight or don't have enough hemoglobin," says Mary Mettilda.

It is the members of Club 25 in the college, who did the study to assess the awareness of blood donation among the general public.

They had categorised people into three groups: Those who never donated, those who had not donated in the last three months and regular donors.

The group had also come up with suggestions and actions needed for improving the availability of blood. "The survey was done on the basis of the camps we conduct in the college," adds Mary

**Courtesy :** Cris, Deccan Chronicle

## COUPLE DONATE BLOOD ON WEDDING DAY



Vineetha and Rejith donating blood at Thrissur IMA.

**Courtesy :** Hiran Unnikrishnan  
Deccan Chronicle

There's more to a wedding ceremony than just tying the knot, sharing a lunch and beginning a new life. This was proved by a newly married couple.

At a time when marriages are all about festivity and extravaganza, a young couple from Thrissur on Sunday, celebrated the auspicious occasion of their marriage with

a rare act for a social cause.

Vineetha and Rejith donated their blood at the IMA blood bank in Ramanilayam, immediately after their marriage.

"It was a different feeling, as most couples accept gifts during their marriage. But my wife and I gifted something to society," said an ecstatic Rejith, after giving his blood. He hoped that others would follow suit and champion social causes.

The best, the simplest and the most unselfish way of helping others was by donating blood, he said

The idea to donate blood as part of the wedding celebrations came up from Vineetha, who works as a lab technician with the blood bank.

"During such solemn ceremonies, people would love to do something virtuous. And what better way than by donating blood?" she asked.

Vineetha hopes that other couples would also be eager to come forward and donate blood. Inspired by the couple's selfless act, a few relatives of the bride and the groom also donated their blood.

A battery of officials from the health department, led by Director of the blood bank, Dr V.Gopinathan and Deputy DMO Nandini, felicitated the couple.

## CLOSE TO A RARE CENTURY K P RAJAGOPALAN WANTS MORE PEOPLE TO DONATE BLOOD AND CREATE AWARENESS ABOUT THE SAME

His Facebook profile photo has a little circle that says 'Give Blood Give Life'. Above the circle is a picture of K P Rajagopalan, snapped at one of his lectures on blood donation.

Rajagopalan showed no signs of being tired when he briskly climbed the stairs at the Press Club to meet us.

After nearly 40 years of regular blood donation, Rajagopalan is a living testimony to the message he has been trying to spread: regular and repeated voluntary blood donation means safe blood and a healthier body.

"It was when I was doing my pre degree, in 1973, that I first donated blood for a small child and was then inspired talking to the likes of Dr Jayaprakash.

I began donating once a year. By '79, it became once every six months and from '85 onwards it's been once every three months," says Rajagopalan who has donated blood 99 times so far.

Rajagopalan is now the General Secretary of the All Kerala Blood Donors Society. Even as he talks to us, he gets a call every few minutes from some hapless soul needing blood for an ailing relative.

We hear him telling off someone for not reserving blood for his pregnant wife earlier. "That is one message I want to spread. When women get pregnant, you give them sweets and treats. But no one thinks about whether they would require blood until it is delivery time. What were their relatives/friends doing these past nine months?" Another development he hopes to achieve is the availability of a community blood bank system.

Over the years Rajagopalan has conducted awareness classes in colleges, resident's associations and other venues on blood donation.

"Men have 76ML blood per kg and women, 66," he explains. "I try to remove many myths about blood circulation like the idea that the blood you donate won't be replenished," he adds.

"You should be ready to donate and help your fellow human beings. One day you may be at the receiving end," he says before signing off.

**courtesy :** Cris, Deccan Chronicle

## GOING SOCIAL FOR BLOOD DONORS

**Courtesy :** Ayesha Tabassum  
Deccan Chronicle

### Blood donation, social networking

Red is often seen as a sign of danger but for Karthik Naralasetty, it is the colour of life. The 23-year-old entrepreneur has popularised red globally through his non-profit initiative socialblood.org.

Known as Social Blood on Facebook, this online application/platform connects people who are in need of blood and those who are willing to donate blood. With a network of over 4,500 members across 19 countries, the programme has helped save many lives.

Karthik was at the NYSE recently to receive his second award. He says, "It was the 50 Most Innovative Companies Run by Students award given by the Kairos Society in the US." He received his first award, the Ashoka Staples Youth Entrepreneurship award, from the US-based Ashoka social entrepreneur

organisation in November 2011.

How did the young entrepreneur come up with the idea for Social Blood?

"Last year, I read a report about a six-year-old girl who was admitted to a hospital for thalassemia. She needed 30 blood donors every month to meet her requirements and that triggered off a thought in my head," says Karthik.

After Karthik started the Social Blood group, he invited friends and the community grew through word of mouth. This May when Social Blood started a group in Brazil, students at a Sao Paulo college acknowledged Karthik's effort and 100 students donated blood. "It's an automatic process and every member fits into the system," says Karthik.

Full of ideas, the youngster's approach to life is different. After dropping out of Rutgers University, New Jersey in 2009, Karthik founded his technology company in Bengaluru that develops mobile and

Web app products.

"A relative, settled in the US for 10 years, told me his greatest achievement was getting the H1B visa and green card. If in 10 years that was all he achieved, I thought it would make sense for me to quit my studies and come back to my own country and work independently," he explains.

Karthik says he consciously made the decision to come back to India. "To work independently in another country is impossible, so I preferred returning and setting up a company here," he adds.

So, who inspires him to think big and out-of-the-box?

"World-class politicians such as Obama, Winston Churchill and others inspire me. I like Hitler too but not for his acts, just for his intelligence," says Karthik, who recently also earned a public administration degree through correspondence.

# BUILDING A BOND OF BLOOD AFTER 153 DONATIONS

**Courtesy :** Express News Service - MADURAI

The Indian Red Cross Society, Madurai Chapter, along with Lady Doak College, conducted a blood donation camp to celebrate the National Blood Donation Day on Monday.

The man behind the show, V M Jose, the 63-year-old secretary of Indian Red Cross Society's Madurai Chapter, had many feathers to his cap. For one, he had donated blood as many as 153 times and had been doing so ever since he was 20 years old.

Added to that, he had been conducting around 80 blood camps every year in Madurai.

Jose's tryst with blood donation began when he donated blood for the first time for an emergency. The incident helped him realise the importance of blood donation and then, there was no looking back.

Jose did not stop with donating blood; he also inspired many youth to join the noble cause. "I continued to donate blood until I turned 60. Following doctor's advice and due to ageing, I stopped donating blood. My blood group is O positive and I

am happy that I have saved the life of many by timely blood donation. Although I stopped donating blood, I keep on organising camps and encouraging many to donate the blood," he said. He remembered the day an old woman thanked him for saving her grandson's life, who was desperately in need of blood.

The community of regular blood donors was quite large and each member had a story to tell.

Mr. Yegappan (66) of Andalpuram, who donated blood 85 times, said "I never expected anything from the receivers. In fact, I would donate without the knowledge of the receivers. Blood donors must be ready to render their help despite busy work, rain and other natural calamities," he said.

There were many more in the city who have silently been part of the movement and instrumental in ensuring regular supply of blood to patients.

Varadarajan of North Veli Street in Madurai, Kuppuraj of Subramaniyapuram and Rajkumar of Ponmeri were a few who continued to render their service, unsung, yet with great motivation, Jose said.

## SCHOOLGIRLS' DAY OUT FOR A NOBLE CAUSE



**Courtesy :** The Hindu News Paper

The National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers of the Cotton Hill Higher Secondary School for Girls, Vazhuthacaud, were a busy lot on Thursday. Groups of them were seen in front of the school gates along the main road, waving at passing vehicles to stop and some patiently explaining to the passers-by to take a little of their time to come and donate blood at the camp being held at the school, while others inside guided each willing volunteer to the school building where the camp was progressing.

Veena, one of the NSS volunteers said, through the project they aimed at creating awareness of the importance of blood donation and driving home the point how the availability blood could be the difference between life and death.

The students had visited nearby shops and establishments the

previous day urging people to take part in the blood donation campaign. "We put up posters too, inviting people to the camp. We also conducted awareness classes in the school and several students expressed interest in taking part in the camp," said Veena.

Once parental consent was received and after confirming that the student met the weight and blood pressure measures, they too were allowed to donate blood at the camp.

She said that a project report would also be prepared after the camp.

A unit from the Regional Cancer Centre (RCC) here, led by Dr. Vijayalakshmi K., began collecting blood in the morning.

Ms. Sreeja, teacher in-charge of the NSS, said close to 50 volunteers turned up in the first hour of the camp itself.

The students presented a short skit, outside the school gates as well, to invite more people to donate blood.

All morning students stood on the roadside inviting voluntary blood donors to the camp.

"Some of them said they were unwell, or they had alcohol the previous night and hence cannot help. There is little we can do to convince such people. But we managed to pursue those who admitted that they were little apprehensive about the procedure," said one of the students.

"We had conducted similar programmes, last year and the year before, with the assistance of Sree Chitra Tirual Institute of Medical Sciences last year and RCC the year before," said Ms. Sreeja, adding that the NSS unit was planning to conduct more camps, including an eye camp.

# REASONS FOR PROMOTING VOLUNTARY BLOOD DONATION

Blood transfusion is an indispensable component of health care. It contributes to saving millions of lives each year in both routine and emergency situations, permits increasingly complex medical and surgical interventions and dramatically improves the life expectancy and quality of life of patients with a variety of acute and chronic conditions. Patients who require transfusion as part of their clinical management have the right to expect that sufficient blood will be available to meet their needs and to receive the safest blood possible. Advantages of Voluntary Blood Donation:

(i) Voluntary blood donors are more likely to donate on a regular basis than other types of donor and this will help in maintaining a proportion of regular blood donors at all times, enables the blood transfusion service to maintain a constant and reliable supply of safe blood when required.

(ii) Patients have improved access to safe blood transfusion in routine and emergency situations. The blood and blood products they receive also carry a low risk of infection that might further compromise their health.

(iii) Patients are not placed under pressure to find blood donors in order to receive treatment and feel a sense of being cared for by others whom they will never meet-the 'UNsung and UNSEEN HEROES'. In turn, this may motivate a spirit of generosity and a desire for reciprocal volunteering in the future by donating blood.

(iv) In a well-organized voluntary donor program, the need for blood in disaster and emergency situations can usually be met through its established donor base. Regular donors tend to be particularly responsive to appeals for donors during periods of blood shortage or in emergency situations because they have already expressed a commitment to voluntary blood donation.

(v) Voluntary donors are well-informed about donor selection criteria and are more likely to self-defer if they are no longer eligible to donate thereby helping in avoiding unnecessary wastage of blood unit positive of infection.

(vi) Provided that they receive good donor care when they donate blood, they feel personal satisfaction and self-esteem which provides a sense of social engagement and belonging and help serve as effective donor educators, recruiters and health promoters.

(vii) In addition to practicing healthy lifestyles themselves, they help to build healthy communities through their influence among their peers and families enabling to build a generation of HIV and other TTI free population in the Society.

Benefits for the Donor:

(i) Having an exalted feeling of saving someone's life.

(ii) Benefit from health education and encouragement to maintain healthy lifestyles free of serious infections including HIV, Hep.B, Hep.C, Malaria and Syphilis.

(iii) Free medical check up for Blood Pressure, Body Weight, Hemoglobin etc as well as referral for medical care, if needed.

(iv) Status of TTIs (HIV, Hep B, Hep C, Malaria, Syphilis) are tested free of cost as testing of all donated blood units for the 5 TTIs are mandatory.

(v) Regular blood donation helps to alleviate certain health problems like heart diseases and cancer. Blood donation is an excellent way to get rid of excess iron accumulated in our body due to its overconsumption. Excess iron in the body can stimulate the formation of free radicals, which are responsible for causing damage to body cells and tissues. Free radicals are also associated with many diseases like heart diseases and cancer.

(vi) Blood donation also burns the extra calories and reduces one's cholesterol level.

(vii) After donating blood, it stimulates the production of new blood cells and refreshes the system.

Hazards of Family/Replacement Blood Donation:

(i) Family/replacement donors cannot meet a community's

requirements for blood and blood products because they provide blood only for specified individual patients when requested.

(ii) Hospitals that are dependent on replacement donors are rarely able to maintain a sufficient stock of blood to meet the transfusion needs of all their patients, particularly in emergency situations or for regular transfusions, or to share their blood supplies with other hospitals.

(iii) Paying people to give blood undermines the principle of voluntary non-remunerated blood donation. Where systems of paid and voluntary blood donation co-exist, people who might otherwise donate voluntarily may opt to receive payment for their blood, thus weakening the voluntary blood donor programs.

(iv) In their eagerness to donate blood to save the life of a loved one or their fear of distressing or displeasing their family, replacement donors may conceal information about their health status or lifestyle behavior. This poses an increased risk of the transmission of infection, often resulting in a higher volume of donated blood that has to be destroyed because of evidence of infectious disease markers.

(v) The onus of providing blood is placed on the patient's family and friends rather than on the hospital/health system. Patients and their families are placed under considerable pressure to find blood donors at a time when they are already stressed because of the patient's illness.

(vi) Relatives who are unwilling or ineligible to donate blood and who cannot find other suitable replacement donors may resort to paying others to donate or arrange to donate.

(vii) The donation of blood on a replacement basis also has an impact on its subsequent use. Patients and their families who have provided blood donors expect that transfusion will be given, even if it is no longer needed because of changes in the patient's clinical condition. Physicians are placed under pressure to transfuse the number of units provided as replacement by their relatives, irrespective of the clinical need and possible risks associated with transfusion.

Understanding the importance of having an organized Blood Transfusion Service based on voluntary non remunerated blood donation in the country, Government of India has formulated the National Blood Policy, 2002. According to the Policy, the main component of a well organized/integrated Blood Transfusion Service include (i) collection of blood from voluntary non remunerated blood donors, (ii) screening for all Transfusion Transmitted Infections and (iii) reduction of unnecessary transfusion.

Without blood there can be no transfusion service. Without human blood donors there can be no blood for transfusion. As such, without a regular flow of real voluntary blood donors who have no axe to grind, to keep blood bank self full, delivery of good quality blood in the right quantity at the right time can never be ensured. Further, it should be accepted and appreciated that:

- Everywhere there are myths, misconceptions and fear complex about blood and blood donation.

- Though no one is born as a blood donor there are more than enough blood donors in any Society to meet the requirement.

- People are not self motivated hence they donate only when they are invited/motivated to donate.

By motivating the young people and other potential donors to donate blood voluntarily on regular basis we will be achieving:

- Safe and sustainable supply of blood and blood products.

- Promotion of Safe and Healthy Life styles (away from drugs, unsafe sexual behavior) - a generation of HIV and other TTI Free population.

Let us celebrate the National Voluntary Blood Donation Day with a pledge to promote 100% voluntary blood donation and do away with family/replacement donation in Manipur.

Written by:- Dr.L.Tomcha Khuman

Founder President, Association of Voluntary Blood Donors, Manipur & Life Member:Federation of Blood Donor Organizations of India (FBDIO)