

BLOOD LINE

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Importance of Voluntary blood donation during COVID pandemic

Blood transfusion is one of the common interventions in health care system. Hence, there is a constant uninterrupted demand for blood and its components especially for those who depends on blood transfusions as a life saving measure. There is no approved synthetic or bio-engineered alternative discovered yet to replicate human blood. Undisputedly, the only potential source for this precious resource is a healthy blood donor.

COVID 19, a serious public health hazard caused by SARS- CoV-2, was declared a pandemic on 11th March, 2020 by WHO. The deadly disease has wreaked havoc across most sectors of day to day life and public health sector is the worst affected one. As a part of the health care system, blood centers across the country had to face a crisis that has probably never seen before – to manage and meet the expectations of donors, doctors and patients. During lockdown period, donor movements were severely restricted and blood centers found it very hard to mobilize the donors.

Blood Transfusion Services during the initial period of lockdown, could overcome the situation mainly because of reduced demands for blood products attributing to low patient admissions. However, the situation has changed and there is a progressive demand for blood products now. So far, there is no scientific evidence to predict on the end date of this critical situation.

■ Impact of COVID 19 on blood donation

There is a substantial reduction in voluntary blood donation especially in the early phase of lockdown. Donors were reluctant to visit hospitals and health facilities due to perceived risk of acquiring infection and also there were difficulties in movement due to lockdown. Conducting voluntary blood donation camps were also not happening during the period. All together, the impact was huge on blood center inventories.

But considering the shortfall of blood supply, in house as well as outdoor blood donation camps are now allowed with all safety precautions as per the guidance released by NBTC dated 25.06.2020. Some of the frequently encountered concerns and clarification on blood donation during COVID 19 are mentioned below.

■ Amidst of COVID 19, who should refrain from blood donations?

Apart from the routine donor selection questionnaire, blood centers included the following questions as per the guidelines laid down by National Blood Transfusion Council (NBTC) on March 2020.

- History of travel outside country or state in past 28 days
- Contact with those who have confirmed disease in past 28 days
- Contact with those who have suspected disease in past 28 days
- Symptom complex of fever, cough, sore throat, breathing difficulty, diarrhea in past 28 days

Those who have an affirmative answer should not be taken for blood donation.

■ Is pre donation COVID 19 testing is required for a blood donor?

There is no recommendation on COVID 19 testing on asymptomatic donors prior to blood donation. However, a healthy eligible donor can still be a cause of apprehension, whether the donor was asymptomatic at the time of donation.

However as a precautionary measure, infection control practices including temperature screening, repeated hand sanitization, wearing mask, social distancing has to be promoted and followed wherever required.

■ Is it safe to donate blood during the current pandemic?

It is safe to donate blood as all blood centers are practicing necessary safety precautions. Healthy donors who meet all the criteria for a blood donation including NBTC - COVID related questionnaire can donate blood safely. Donors must adhere to instructions provided by blood centers on preventing the COVID 19 spread.

■ Is blood transfusion safe during COVID 19?

There is no data supporting that the virus is transfusion transmittable till date.

■ What has to be done, if a donor tested positive for COVID 19 after blood donation?

If the donor tested positive / close contact have been confirmed positive / post donation illness suspicious of COVID in self within 28 days of blood donation, she/he should report back to blood center immediately as per NBTC recommendations.

■ When can a COVID 19 recovered patient return to normal blood donor pool?

They can return to donation after full recovery and tested negative for COVID-19 and have been symptom free for at least 28 days.

To conclude, voluntary blood donors plays a pivotal role in health promotion. They also serve as donor motivators, educators and recruiters. Voluntary donors enables the blood transfusion services to maintain a sustained and reliable supply of safe blood. This is the time we should take scientific precautions for donor attendance. Patient blood management and use of restrictive transfusion strategies need to be emphasized considering the criticality of the situation.

Protect yourself and save others!



Dr. Sanooja Pinki

Head of the Department, Transfusion Medicine
Kerala Institute of Medical Sciences, Trivandrum

TERUMO PENPOL celebrated National Blood Donation Day as a gala event in association with SCTIMST

October 1st is an integral day in the timeline for Terumo Penpol as it is on this day National Blood Donation Day is observed across the country. Terumo Penpol being the flag bearers for voluntary blood donation uses this opportunity to motivate and recognize regular donors. Though COVID19 scenario has changed the landscape dramatically, our conviction to promote Voluntary Blood Donation never fizzles.

TPPL in association with Sree Chithra Thirunal Institute for Science and Technology(SCTIMST) observed the National Blood Donation Day at SCTIMST blood bank by giving away gifts to regular donors and organizations who were dedicated to Voluntary Blood Donation by strictly adhering to the covid19 guidelines and by following the local administration protocol.

The distribution of gifts to donors was scheduled between 9am and 12pm.

Mr. Mani T S, Senior Manager, Admin represented Terumo Penpol and became the major speaker at the event.

Speaking at the event, Mani T S, spoke about the fundamental connection between TPPL and SCTIMST and how both the entities nurtured it over the years. He also spoke about the reason behind the observance and why it is important to donate blood.

The arrangement was made in such a way that blood donors were allowed to visit the blood bank at any time between this slot to collect their gifts. This measure was taken to avoid gathering of any kind. Only 5 people were allowed at a time. Shajudeen JS, Gopakumar A, S, Hareesh Babu, Prashanth Kumar T S and Muralee Krishna A from Terumo Penpol was honored with gifts for their regular blood donation.



Mani T S, Senior Manager, Admin,
addressing the donors



Shajudeen J S



Prashanth Kumar T S



Hareesh Babu



Muralee Krishna A



Gopakumar A

“ Thanks Baby. You always have some interesting articles.
Regards

Dr Zarin Bharucha,
chairperson of the Federation of Bombay Blood Bank

“ Superb. Hearty congratulations.

Dr.Sharad jain
Dept of Transfusion Medicine,Govt Medical College
Jabalpur

“ Dear Baby,

Wonderful issue, yet again J
Very heartening photos of the India-wide participation on
World Blood Donor Day!
Can you confirm the source of the data and article on Thalas-
semia & Sickle Cell in India?
Many thanks,

Shalini Gambir
Lead - Partnerships, Patient Programs & Special Projects
DKMS BMST Foundation India,Bangalore

“ Baby! This is AMAZING!! Wouldn't it be great to do a quarterly
newsletter for the Global Blood Donation Program?? I love
this! J Have a wonderful long weekend.

Carly Newton
Global Commercial Training Manager
Global Mktg Therapeutics
TERUMO BCT,Lakewood



Letter To The Editor

”

“ Thanks a lot Baby, good effort.
Warm Regards,

P T George | Vice President | HR & Admin.
V-Guard , Kochi

“ Dear Madam,
Congratulations! Right steps during the Covid period.
Best wishes for the future endeavours.

Baby Prabhakaran ,CEO - The Blue Point Org

“ Dear P S Baby

Greetings! The information you have provided in the newsletter is
vital for society. I appreciate the time and effort that went into
collating the information.
Let me know if I can help you with your part of the project.

Thanks, &Regards

Siji Nair
Managing Editor & Director
Metro Mart | Metro EXPEDITION | Executive Knowledge Lines

Voluntary Blood Donation Is An Extraordinary Gift, But This man Went The Extra Mile

As the country went into a lockdown due to the coronavirus in the last week of March 2020, voluntary donation at blood banks nearly came to a grinding halt. On the other hand, the demand for blood from hospitals, for emergency surgeries, thalassemia patients and pregnancy-related operations, increased manifold. While many voluntary donors stopped visiting blood banks because of the fear of contracting the virus, there was a band of heroes who continued to follow their schedule of donating blood every three months. Rahul Sholapurkar 61 year old, is an ordinary man, but he has been voluntarily and religiously donating blood for decades. Even the coronavirus cannot stop him

When Sholapurkar got a call from the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) enquiring whether he could help the organization get in touch with regular donors and motivate them to donate blood, he jumped in. He started checking out and contacting the numbers of voluntary donors from the IRCS database. Citing his own efforts, he convinced scores to come to the blood bank in central Delhi and donate their blood. "There is fear in the air due to the coronavirus, and it is not easy to overcome it. It was my task to inspire confidence in blood donors and tell them that it is absolutely safe to donate blood," Sholapurkar says.

He has been donating blood for more than 40 years now—163 times to be exact, probably the highest in India. That is almost four times a year; it is also the maximum number of times a person can donate blood in a year. "As I complete 90 days after a donation, I feel my body and mind dragging me towards a blood bank," Sholapurkar laughs. The IRCS calls people like Sholapurkar 'centurion blood donors'—in other words, those who have donated blood more than a hundred times.

According to Sholapurkar, blood donation is not only a healthy practice, it is also one way of showing that you care for others. "Voluntary blood donation is a very personal thing. Nobody can force you to do it; you do it out of love for other human beings. It gives immense satisfaction knowing that your blood will be used to save someone's life. That is a very powerful feeling indeed." Sholapurkar was only 17 when he first donated blood, and he remembers his mother not being very happy about it. "It was in a National Cadet Corps (NCC) camp. My mother was rather angry, but she



was okay when I told her how blood donation helps," he recalls.

Sholapurkar has worked in various corporate organizations over the years. These days, however, he devotes most of his time spreading the message of the importance of blood donation. "I tell people to get addicted to blood donation, just like I am. It has no side effects, you will remain healthy and it is one addiction you will never feel bad about," he says.

Courtesy : www.readersdigest.in/true-stories

Terumo Penpol Celebrated National Blood Donation Day in association with College of Engineering, Trivandrum

ERYTHRO 3.0

Blood donors save lives every day through their blood donations; every second around the world, there is a person who needs a blood transfusion to survive.

In connection with National Voluntary Blood Donation Day, Terumo Penpol in association with NSS CET conducted the famed annual event "Erythro" to promote voluntary blood donation among youngsters.

Erythro is a week-long major event organized by Terumo Penpol Private Limited to enhance awareness among the students regarding the relevance of voluntary blood donation and ensures that this awareness leads to the successful voluntary blood donations. Considering the pandemic situation, this year Erythro was conducted through online means.

The program was launched by Mr. G P Sajith Babu, Asst. Programme advisor & Regional Director, NSS on Sept 24.

This year there were mainly five events conducted all over Kerala,

1. Athijeev
2. Art from trash
3. Asrikayan
4. Fotonovela
5. Elocution

The crux of Erythro 3.0 was its flagship event, Athijeev, a blood donation challenge conducted from September 25th to October 1st. The event addressed the need of maximum number of voluntary blood donations in this epidemic scenario. It was conducted as a competition between all the NSS units registered under Kerala Technical University. The event was initiated to reach the goal of 150 donations by the end of the week and to even bag the 15k cash awards. 37 colleges registered for the voluntary blood donation challenge and were successful in attaining a total of 254 blood donations, from all the corners of Kerala.

Winner: NSS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING PALAKKAD - 65 donations

ART FROM TRASH

This event was conducted for all students under KTU. Students were asked to make craftworks using used or naturally available materials from their home. The event was officially launched on 28th September 2020. Event details, rules and judgment criteria were sent to every KTU colleges by the event coordinators and NSS volunteers on the same day through online platforms. We had a positive response from the students. By the end of deadline for submission which was 3rd October 2020 at 4pm, we received 21 entries from various colleges.

Winners

1st prize:
Aavani P S
College of Engineering Trivandrum

2nd prize:
Roja Roy
College of Engineering, Chengannur

3rd prize:
Apsara P Purushothaman
College: AISAT

ASRIKAYAN

The Treasure Hunt, ASRIKAYAN was organized on 2nd and 3rd of October '20. It was conducted entirely through various social media platforms and was open to all students under KTU. The event had two rounds where the participants had to solve a series of clues based on Blood Donation. The event was successful enough to attract around 400 registrations. The first round included a task of solving a chain of clues and puzzles carefully placed across platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. At every point, a puzzle had to be solved and a clue that lead to the next point were given. After the first round, 17 participants found their way to the second round.

They are:

Muhammed Fasil, GEC Barton Hill
Chandu Kurian, Cherian RIT Kottayam
Abhirami VS, GEC Barton Hill
Gouri A V, CET Trivandrum
Shibily MV, Royal College of Engineering And Technology
Sneha S Narayanan, BCET
Sneha A P, GEC Barton Hill
Vishnu Priya A S, GEC Barton Hill
Harishree G, GEC Barton Hill
Aswathy K Sundaram, GECB
Luxmin S S R, CET Trivandrum
Akhil V Nair, CET Trivandrum
Akshay Subhash, CET Trivandrum
Arundivakar B, RIT Kottayam
Sravana. M. S, RIT Kottayam
Jyothis Krishnan, RIT Kottayam
Devi Krishna N L, RIT Kottayam

The second day the clue was given through pdfs.

Winners

1st - Sneha Ap - GEC Barton hill
2nd - Shibili - Royal College of engineering
3rd - Fasil -GEC Barton hill

FOTONOVELA

Photographs are a great medium to convey stories and emotions. Subsuming this idea, a 'Photo story competition' organised. The participants were engaged to share 'A story using series of photographs (5 to 8 pictures)' on the topic "Blood Donation".

The judgements were based on creativity and originality of the story as well as the depth of the message conveyed through the same. We got entries from different KTU colleges and the worthy winners were awarded based on the above judgement.

Winners

1. Rahul A, CET
2. Johns Vincent, CET
3. Adithya P M, AWH Engineering College, Calicut

ELOCUTION TALK & ELOCUTION COMPETITION

A session was conducted on 26th September 2020 via google meet as part of National blood donation day on behalf of Erythro 3.0, for giving an awareness on blood donation among the SPC students of GGHSS Cotton Hill school. Mr. K P Rajagopal,, President of FIBDO shared his ideas and experiences on blood donations with students.

As a part of this session an elocution competition was organized for SPC students of GGHSS Cotton Hill School from 27th to 30th September. We conducted the competition as two sections. But there were not enough participants from HS section. 7 students from HSS section actively joined in the competition and 3 had won the prize.

Winners

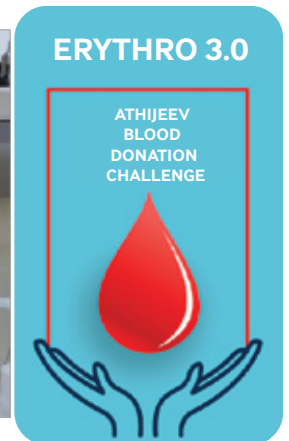
1. Parvathy P Nair
2. Veena G
3. Adya Ajai

The ending ceremony of Erythro 3.0 was conducted on October 11, 2020 via google meet.

The Chief guest for the programmer was Trivandrum District collector Smt.Navjyoth Khosa IAS. The winners were announced during the ceremony.

Dr. Joy Varghese V.M-P.O of NSS, CET gave the welcome speech. Presidential address was given by Dr Jiji C V, Principal of College of Engineering , Trivandrum. Ms. Neethi S Pillai, University coordinator of KTU NSS blood cell, Abubakkar Sidique-from Pallium India, Ms. Baby .P.S and Mr. Govind R from Terumo Penpol also graced the occasion with their words.

We have battled all the limitations COVID has brought us and showed that we have succeeded in helping to reduce the dire need for blood donations during the COVID times, while also duly considering the safety precautions during this time. Erythro has thus once again proved to be a successful endeavor even with the current state of COVID19.



National Blood Donation Day Celebrations– North Zone

As part of the National Blood Donation Day observance, TERUMO PENPOL organized 24 camps along with our Customers.

The objective of the camp was to ensure that the blood banks have adequate amount of blood for the needs despite the COVID19 situation that is forcing potential donors to avoid blood banks.

The donors who showed up at the camps were recognized by gifting T-Shirts with a blood donation slogan. Given below are the list of hospitals that organized blood donation camps.

SL.no	Customer Name	City
1	Life Line Blood bank- Ghaziabad	Ghaziabad
2	Metro Hospital – Noida	Noida
3	SSPHPGTI – Noida	Noida
4	Samarpan Blood bank- Agra	Agra
5	Lokitam Blood bank- Agra	Agra
6	Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research	Chandigarh
7	GMCH-	Chandigarh
8	Rotary blood bank Chandigarh	Chandigarh
9	Max Mohali	Mohali
10	Fortis Hopsital Mohali	Mohali
11	Sohana Hospital Mohali	Mohali
12	IMA VARANASI	UP
13	HOMI BHABHA Varanasi	UP
14	Savitri hospital Gorakhpur	UP
15	Fatima Gorakhpur	UP
16	Max Saket	Delhi
17	AIIMS RISHIKESH	Uttarakhand
18	Shree agrasen international hospital	Delhi
19	Venkateswara dwarka	Delhi
20	Max Devkidevi	Delhi



National Blood Donation Celebrations At Medical College Hospital Blood Bank, Trivandrum

The National Voluntary Blood donation day is celebrated on October 1st every year to commemorate the contributions of Dr Jai Gopal Jolly who is the father of Transfusion Medicine in India. In order to promote voluntary blood donation and combat the hazardous professional blood donation; voluntary blood donors and organizations are honored on this day.

Five organizations were honored for their contribution to voluntary blood donation especially during the COVID 19 pandemic when the department faced severe blood shortage. The organizations which helped to tide over the crisis includes DYFI, BDK, KEBS, SAPTAH and AKDF.

The convalescent plasma from COVID 19 recovered patients is used for management of COVID19 patients. The department of Transfusion Medicine was able to provide CP to patients admitted in MCH, Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam. Four convalescent plasma donors and a regular voluntary blood donor were felicitated in this program.

On October 7th, the Honorable Health Minister Smt.K.K.Shailaja, Govt. of Kerala, inaugurated the Automation of Blood Bank, GMC , Thiruvananthapuram and announced the upraising of the department to State Nodal Blood Centre. This virtual inauguration was presided over by the honorable Health Secretary Dr Rajan N Khobragade IAS; KSACS Project Director Dr R Ramesh, GMC, Thiruvananthapuram Principal Dr Sara Vargheese, Superintendent Dr M S Sharmad and Transfusion MEDICINE HOD Dr Meena D. The State Transfusion Policy was also unveiled at this function.



In short supply, relatives of Covid patients scramble for plasma amid strict hospital norms

Data from Food and Drug Administration (FDA) until September 30 shows that blood banks have sold 9,194 plasma units across Maharashtra

A health worker takes a swab sample for Covid-19 testing in Mumbai.

Patients are on a desperate chase for convalescent plasma, an experimental therapy for Covid-19, as demand grows but very few recovered patients are willing to donate.

Data from Food and Drug Administration (FDA) until September 30 shows that blood banks have sold 9,194 plasma units across Maharashtra and 1,216 units remain in stock. Across the state, 108 blood banks have the license to collect plasma through apheresis machines.

On October 8, Paromita Sen went on a calling spree to every acquaintance to scout for a recovered Covid-19 patient who matches her mother Ranjana Sen's blood group and is willing to donate. Ranjana, aged 70 and a diabetic, was breathless and on oxygen support two days after testing positive at Vedant hospital in Thane.

By the night of October 9, with help of FDA, she had purchased one unit from Navi Mumbai's Bloodline bank. Several social workers came together to find an eligible donor with B positive blood group for a second unit of plasma. "The stress is overwhelming," Paromita said.

No proof of efficacy

Convalescent plasma therapy still remains under discussion for its efficacy. It is yet to be proved that the therapy prevents mortality among Covid-19 patients. But with limited treatment options, doctors are increasingly relying on it. The stigma around being infected with Covid-19 has kept donors at bay, and lack of prompt availability of plasma remains a major hurdle in its timely and effective use to tackle the virus.

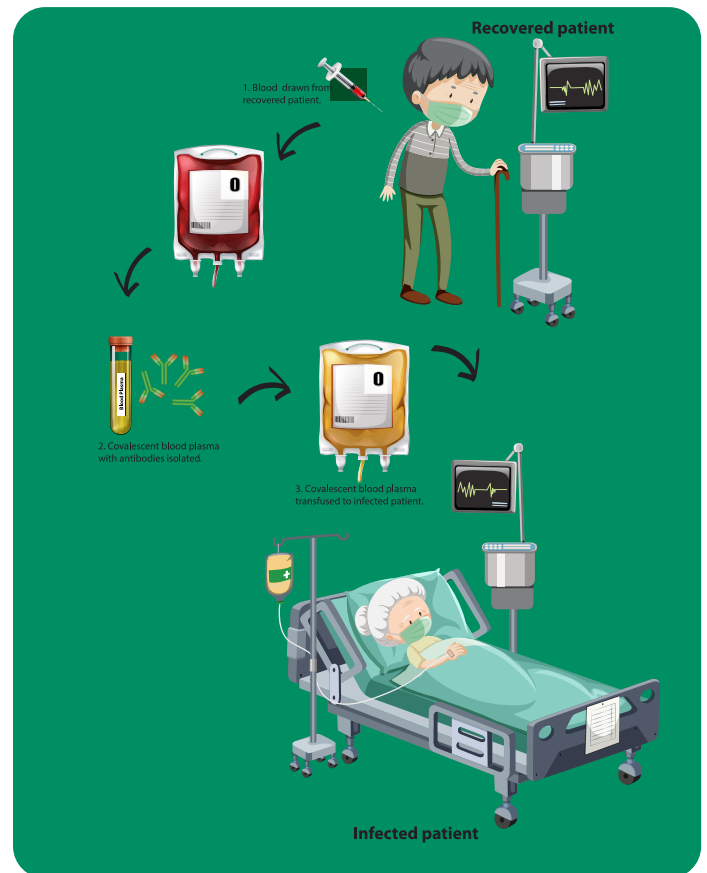
Plasma therapy is extraction of antibodies from a recovered Covid-19 patient and injection into another patient to fasten latter's immune response against coronavirus. While this therapy is part of ongoing research and there is little evidence about its efficiency, the Drug Controller General of India allows its off-label use for Covid-19 treatment.

Maharashtra has 12.55 lakh recovered Covid-19 patients, but it has managed to tap less than 1 per cent of them for plasma donation. Lack of plasma in blood banks and insistence of hospitals to get a donor have put the burden to secure plasma on the kin of the patients.

"Every day, I get 10 to 15 calls for plasma. We desperately reach out to people on WhatsApp to donate. It takes days to find a donor," said social worker Darshan Popat, part of #SOSsaviours, a group of Mumbai residents who help Covid-19 patients.

On September 24, the Maharashtra government had capped plasma charges at Rs 5,500 per 200 ml unit. Dr Arun Thorat, in charge of State Blood Transfusion Council, said the price cap was introduced to curb profiteering. A 200 ml unit of plasma was sold at Rs 11,000 before it was capped. "Hospitals cannot insist on replacement donor in exchange of plasma or refuse plasma from other blood banks," Thorat said. But the shortage has forced hospitals to do so. In Nanavati hospital, Nirmala Singh was administered first plasma dose through the hospital's blood bank. But for the second dose in September, her son Niraj Singh was asked to look for a donor. "I asked if I could get plasma from another bank, but they insisted on finding a donor," he said. Nirmala continues to remain in the ICU. "Our large pool of recovered patients and employees have selflessly donated plasma since the past few months. In extremely rare instances, when the donor cannot be arranged by the hospital, we encourage patient's family in locating a plasma donor from outside. For the safety of the patient and to ensure standard clinical quality control protocols are followed, we prefer to perform the plasma transfusion at our facility," said a spokesperson from Nanavati hospital.

Last week, Hiranandani hospital officials asked the family of T M Thomas to get donors in replacement of the plasma they transfused. "I managed to get three donors," said Stalgy Thomas, his daughter. Hansmukh Gandhi was also administered plasma at Hiranandani hospital and his son Amit Gandhi was asked to arrange for replacement donors. "But they did not make it compulsory," Gandhi said. Hospital CEO Dr Sujit Chatterjee said: "We do not have a policy as such of not accepting outside plasma donation but we request and encour-



age families of patients to get their own donors to ensure that patient gets good quality plasma. But in cases where families are unable to get donors for some reason, we procure plasma from sources available outside." He added that plasma therapy has scientific evidence and helps fight the infection better. Thane FDA Drug inspector Virendra Ravi said hospitals cannot insist on replacement donors or live donors if they have plasma available in their bank. "The problem hospitals are facing is in convincing recovered patients to return 28 days after discharge to donate plasma. Very few are willing to donate even if they benefited from someone else's plasma. In Thane division, we have recorded only 1,100 donors," he added.

In Mumbai, 31 blood banks licensed to extract plasma have 591 units left in all, FDA data until September 30 shows. Bandra resident Lateef Shaikh has experienced the shortage thrice. "It's a task to look for donor on short notice," he said. On August 28, his father-in-law was admitted in Saifee hospital with Covid-19. It took a day to find a donor. But he could not be saved despite the therapy.

On September 8, Shaikh's 76-year-old father also tested positive and suffered a cytokine storm. Holy Family hospital, where he was admitted, did not have plasma. "I called several blood banks, KEM and Sion hospitals, none had plasma," he said. Shaikh finally purchased two units from Nalasopara-based Sathiya blood bank. His father survived but his friend's mother was diagnosed with Covid-19 on September 29 and required plasma. She was admitted to Neptune hospital, Mira Road. "The price capping notification had been released by then, and every blood bank we called refused citing they are facing loss at selling plasma for Rs 5,500. Even during the pandemic, blood banks are looking for profit," Shaikh said. His friend's mother was a heart patient. While plasma was eventually arranged through Sathiya blood bank, she passed away. Sandhya Fernandes, also a social worker, said hospitals only list requirement of plasma but do not hand hold patient's family in procuring it.

Source: The New Indian Express

STATE'S PLASMA THERAPY PLANS

Plasma therapy could be a lifesaving treatment plan for critically-ill Covid-19 patients until a vaccine or medicine is developed. Plasma therapy involves transfusion of plasma from a recovered person to those with moderate to severe Covid-19 infection. While evidence of the true benefits of this therapy is very thin, efforts are on to encourage those recovered from the illness to donate plasma and set up plasma banks. Here's a look at the plasma procedure in the state



STATE'S PLASMA THERAPY PLANS

Regional plasma banks for Covid-19 treatment

- The government started plasma banks under licensed blood banks after plasma shortage was reported in a few districts.
- First plasma bank in the state was opened in Manjeri in July.
- Plasma bank started in Kottayam on October 1. It plans to collect plasma from five people cured of Covid-19 per day for the next 100 days
- Involved in collection, testing and storage of convalescent plasma in an organised manner.
- Ensures tested group-specific convalescent plasma is readily available for use.
- Patients need not bother about arranging the required plasma.

Plasma awareness week from Oct 5-9

- Raise global awareness on source plasma collection
- Recognise the contributions of plasma donors in saving and improving lives

INPUTS: UNNIKRISHNAN S

Plasma donation criteria

- People cured of Covid-19 and in the age group of 18 to 55 are chosen as donors
- Additional donor eligibility includes two negative test results for SARS Cov-2 and titre studies to assess the level of SARS CoV-2 neutralising antibodies
- Those recovered at least two weeks before can donate plasma
- A donor can repeat donation at an interval of two weeks to a maximum of 24 donations per year.
- Convalescent plasma collected from one donor can be used for treating 2-5 patients
- Apheresis procedure is employed to collect 600-1,000 ml of convalescent plasma at a time.

There is no effective and approved treatment currently available against SARS CoV-2 infection and there are anecdotal reports of convalescent plasma being effective in a few cases of moderate to severe infection

Dr Amita R

ICMR has undertaken a clinical trial to evaluate the efficacy of convalescent plasma therapy in Covid-19 infection called Placid trial and results are awaited

Dr Debasish Gupta

Dept of Transfusion Medicine, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram

State Blood Cell launched in Capital district

In addition, haemophilia treatment centres will be set up in taluk hospitals.

By Express News Service

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Reaching out to patients suffering from blood disorders (thalassemia, haemophilia, sickle cell anaemia, haemoglobinopathies and others), a State Blood Cell was established at SAT Hospital on Saturday. Through the cell, daycare centres for blood disorders will come up in all districts. In addition, haemophilia treatment centres will be set up in taluk hospitals.

Launching the centre, Health Minister K K Shailaja said four regional centres will be established — Government Medical College Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram, District Hospital, Aluva, Government Medical College, Kozhikode, and District Hospital, Mananthavady. The project director of Kerala State AIDS Control Society will act as the state nodal officer of the cell.

The implementation of the programme has been entrusted through a state-level steering committee headed by the health minister and a technical committee headed by the state mission director of the National Health Mission. "Similar cells have been established in neighbouring states. As the state has a considerable number of patients suffering from blood disorders, this cell is a necessity. It will ensure that they are provided with quality care and medicines," said an officer with the health department.

Other objectives of the cell include working in national and global projects on haemophilia, bleeding disorder projects or studies, coordinating with NGOs and patient bodies to improvise haemophilia care and to closely monitor the requirement of anti-haemophilia factors of all haemophilia treatment centres and designated government medical college hospitals.

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