



## **AATM recommendations (guidelines) to prevent COVID-19 infection through the blood supply.**

AATM feels the responsibility to inform its membership without unnecessarily reinventing the Corona virus infection prevention wheel. So far there are no data that suggest transmission of COVID-19 through blood transfusion. The recommendations are precautionary.

There are appropriate guidelines available through the CSBT China and WHO Geneva that provide more detailed information (contact [ymzhu@sbc.org.cn](mailto:ymzhu@sbc.org.cn) or <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public> ).

### **Community contacts**

1. Open an active COVID-19 information center for public and potential donors.
2. Avoid gathering of larger numbers of potential donors at donor sessions/camps; spread call up of donors and instruct them to come individually.
3. Discourage symptomatic common cold, flu or influenza (last 28 days) potential donors to attend a session/camp/donor center, but inform and keep in contact with the blood center.
4. During the anamnestic questionnaire pay adequate attention to symptoms of common cold, flu and/or influenza and ask for recent (past 28 days) contacts with people (family, friends, others) with symptoms of common cold, flu and/or influenza, like coughing, sneezing, temperature, running nose, head ache and muscle aching; or have been diagnosed with or in contact with people with COVID-19 infection.
5. When a contact is mentioned or suspected explain temporary deferral for a minimum of 28 days while keeping in contact with the blood center.
6. Ask active donors to report in case of fever, common cold, flu or influenza within 48 hours after donation; collected blood should be discarded.
7. Inform potential donors with a risk factor for infection about a possible infection and advise them to consult their private practitioner.

### **Follow up of potentially infected potential donors**

1. Ask deferred donors to keep in regular contact and report on their health condition and of those in close contact (family, friends, others).
2. Ask deferred donors to avoid direct contact with other potential donors over the period of deferral (28 days).

### **Clinical use of blood and blood products**

1. Inform the hospitals about the blood collection precautions taken.
2. Inform hospitals (prescribing clinicians) about the absence of evidence of COVID-19 transmission through blood transfusion.
3. Request hospitals to report back on patients suspected to have developed post-transfusion symptoms of COVID-19 infection to allow appropriate look back and collect evidence-based data.

### **Staff and visitors**

1. When signs of common cold, flu and/or influenza have been present during the last 28 days, contact the medical director for instructions.
2. When having been in contact or lived with family/friends or others with signs or symptoms of COVID-19 infections, contact the medical director for instructions.
3. Visitors - Visit the blood center only when absolutely necessary; if contact is needed communicate through social media.

### **Simple rules to observe and follow**

1. Avoid unnecessary contact with people having a common cold, flu or influenza signs and symptoms (temperature, running nose, productive coughing, head and muscle aching).
2. Wash and disinfect frequently hands, working surfaces and instruments.
3. Use gloves and paper tissues, avoid close contact e.g. shaking hands, hugging and kissing when meeting people.
4. Stay home when having symptoms of common cold, flu and/or influenza and communicate with your medical director.
5. Discourage potential donors to attend when over the past 28 days having travelled outside the country or inside to endemic areas; having lived with or been in close contact with persons with signs and symptoms of respiratory disease in particular common cold, flu and influenza types.
6. Distribute only evidenced information and avoid spreading fear fuelling rumours.

**Remember – the need of blood is continuous. The only source is a healthy voluntary donor donating in a healthy environment**