

PATIENT EDUCATION

IF YOU NEED A BLOOD TRANSFUSION

IN AN EMERGENCY, YOUR DOCTOR WILL DECIDE WHETHER TO TRANSFUSE AND WHAT COMPONENT TO USE

If you transfusion is **NOT AN EMERGENCY, ASK YOUR DOCTOR** about:

BENEFITS: Why you may need a transfusion

- ◆ To increase the amount of oxygen circulating in you blood to support your body functions
- ◆ To replace factors or cells in your blood that help stop bleeding
- ◆ To replace blood that may be lost and can't be retrieved because of:
 1. Your condition
 2. Trauma / injury
 3. Treatment / procedure which may cause your blood cells to be lower for a time
- ◆ Other reasons your doctor will explain

METHODS: What blood you may receive

- ◆ Whole blood is rarely used, parts of the whole blood you need are usually given
- ◆ Red blood cells are given to support oxygen levels
- ◆ Platelets are needed for some bleeding problems
- ◆ Fresh frozen plasma (thawed) and/or concentrated forms of plasma are needed for some bleeding problems
- ◆ White blood cells are given only in special circumstances

ALTERNATIVES: What choice you may have, such as:

- ◆ To avoid having the transfusion at all
- ◆ Using your own blood
- ◆ Having family or friends provide blood
- ◆ Taking other medications instead of transfusion

