

Just One – Why Give Two When One Will Do?

Date Effective: December 1, 2018

Background Information:

Just One is an awareness campaign that aims to reduce unnecessary red cell transfusions by encouraging all staff involved in the transfusion of red cells to order **Just One** unit of blood at a time.

Recommendation:

At the time of order, please consider the following evidence-based recommendations made by the Canadian Society for Transfusion Medicine and Choosing Wisely Canada:

1. Just one unit of blood should be ordered for stable patients with no clinical bleeding.
2. Re-assess before requesting a second unit of blood. Indications for a second unit of blood are:
 - Active blood loss
 - Ongoing symptoms of anemia

References/Resources:

Click here to see [more evidence-based recommendations](#).

Patient Impact:

Each unit of blood administered has the potential to cause adverse reactions. These can range from a minor rash or fever to more severe reactions such as acute respiratory distress or even death. Reactions to a transfusion can occur immediately or may be delayed as the body responds to the donor's red cells. In addition, every unit of blood transfused increases the likelihood of the patient developing antibodies to donor red cells, resulting in challenges in finding compatible units if/when the patient requires further transfusions.

System Improvements:

Reducing the number of transfused red cells can reduce the significant pressure on Canada's blood supply, ensuring availability for patients who require lifesaving units. System improvements also include reducing workload on Transfusion Medicine departments and Canadian Blood Services as they work to collect, process, distribute and issue these blood products.

Choosing Wisely Manitoba, in partnership with Shared Health, has developed posters and postcards that relay safe transfusion practice regarding single unit transfusion orders. **The postcard will be attached to each red cell unit as it is issued from the blood bank.**

This campaign is intended to educate and remind clinicians of best practices and guidelines around red cell infusions and potential harms. (May not apply to outpatient transfusions for oncology patients.)

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For more information please go to <https://bestbloodmanitoba.ca/about/>

This Clinical Practice Change is a directive of Choosing Wisely Manitoba, an initiative to improve the appropriate use of diagnostic testing in our province. Choosing Wisely Manitoba is a partnership of the Centre for Health Care Innovation and Shared Health.