

From the Chief Medical Officer:
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HSS(MD)24/2005

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Medical Directors of Acute Trusts (for dissemination to
Orthopaedic surgeons)
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Dear Colleague

EXCLUSION OF FEMORAL HEADS FROM LIVING DONORS - vCJD PRECAUTIONS

The UK Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Blood and Tissues and Organs (MSBTO; previously MSBT) has discussed the potential vCJD transmission risk arising from people who have received blood transfusions since 1 January 1980 and have recommended that living donors should be excluded from donating femoral heads.

Action Required

As an interim safety measure, to exclude the donation of femoral heads from living donors who have definitely received blood transfusions since 1 January 1980. This action should be introduced prospectively, ie for all new live donations, and as soon as practicable, but no later than 31 July 2005.

Background

Since December 2003, there have been two reported instances in the UK where the vCJD agent is thought to have been transmitted by blood transfusion. As a consequence, MSBTO is advising on further precautionary measures to protect against transmission via blood and other tissues. People who have themselves previously received transfusions of blood components, including red cells, plasma and platelets, since January 1980 have been excluded from donating blood since April 2004. This advice is now being extended to femoral head donation. MSBTO has yet to make a recommendation on the use of cadaveric bone donations

from transfused individuals and these are not being excluded at present. The UK Blood Services bone banks and some independent banks have already implemented this exclusion policy for living donations and MSBTO has recommended that all other bone banks implement it as soon as practicable.

In order to mitigate the impact on supply, banks are asked to:

- Introduce implementation prospectively ie for all new donations.
- Limit the deferral to *definitely* transfused individuals in the first instance.

It is anticipated that individuals who *are likely* to have received transfusions may also be excluded at a future date. Any changes to the current recommendation will be posted on the DH website and communicated via the British Association of Tissue Banking.

Tissues and Cells Directive

I would like to take this opportunity to remind tissue establishments that EC Directive 2004/23 entered into force on 7 April 2004 and applies to the donation, procurement, testing, processing, preservation, storage and distribution of human cells and tissues intended for human application. All tissue banking establishments and staff need to be aware of the Directive's requirements. Implementation of the Directive is required by 7 April 2006.

Yours sincerely

Henrietta Campbell (Dr)

**cc: Mr A Hamilton
Mr D Sullivan
Mr A Browne
Mr P Maguire
Mr F Rice
Mrs D Kenny
Mr G Dorrian**

This letter is available at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk and also on the DHSSPS Extranet which can be accessed directly at <http://extranet.dhsspsni.gov.uk> or by going through the HPSS Web at <http://www.n-i.nhs.uk> and clicking on DHSSPS.