



American
Red Cross

Empower

GROUP CARE



David C. Mair MD

American Red Cross



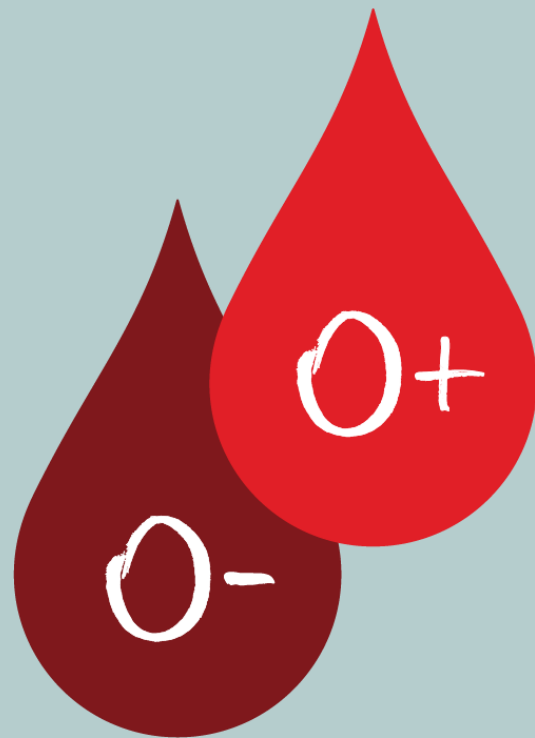


**American
Red Cross**

Empower GROUP O CARE

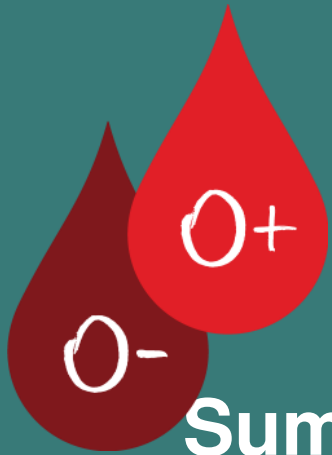
A Program designed to **strengthen blood supply resiliency by advancing sustainable stewardship practices.**

Through education and awareness, we promote responsible use of O-negative and O-positive blood to ensure these vital resources are readily available for patients when needed.



Purpose:

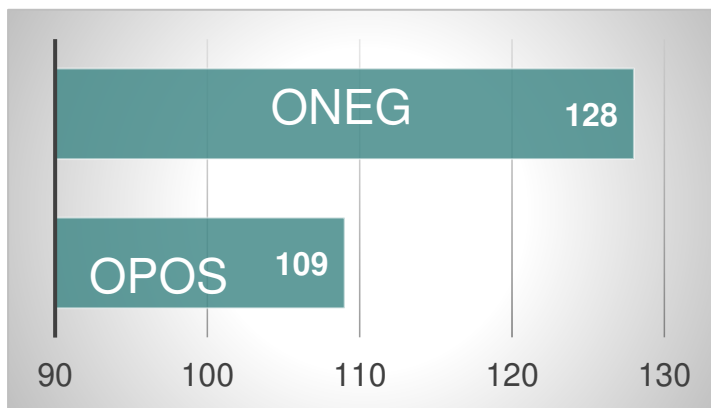
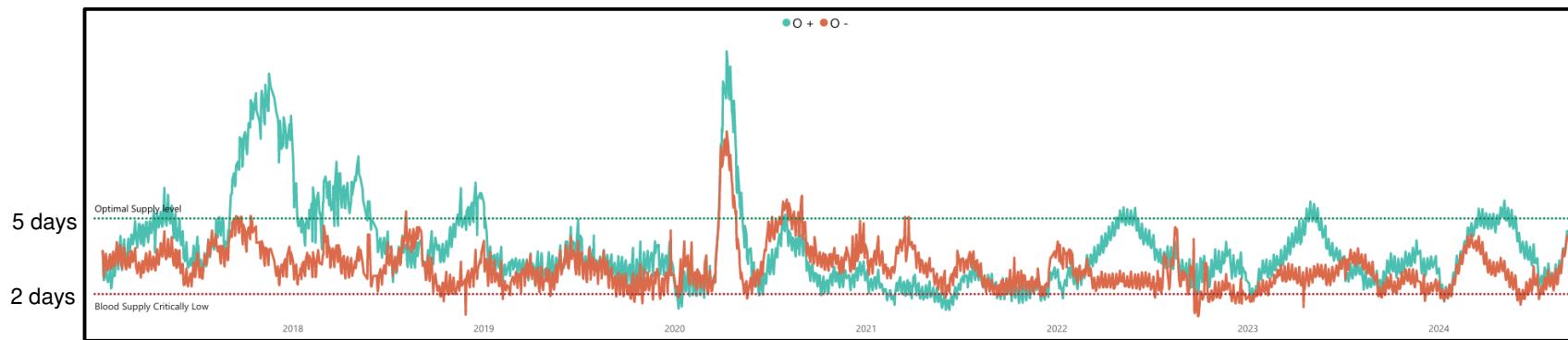
- **Summarize** national trends in supply and hospital utilization of O negative red blood cells
- **Examine** O negative overuse as a contributor to O negative shortages
- **Review** industry guidance on use of Group O red blood cells
- **Discuss** strategies hospitals can employ to reduce overutilization of O negative red blood cells
 - Explain the safety of using O positive units for O negative patients
 - KnOw Where Your O's GO
- **Describe** efforts by the American Red Cross to stabilize O negative red blood cell supply
 - We want to partner with you



**Summarize national trends in supply &
hospital utilization of O-neg red blood
cells (RBCs)**

Rationale For Change

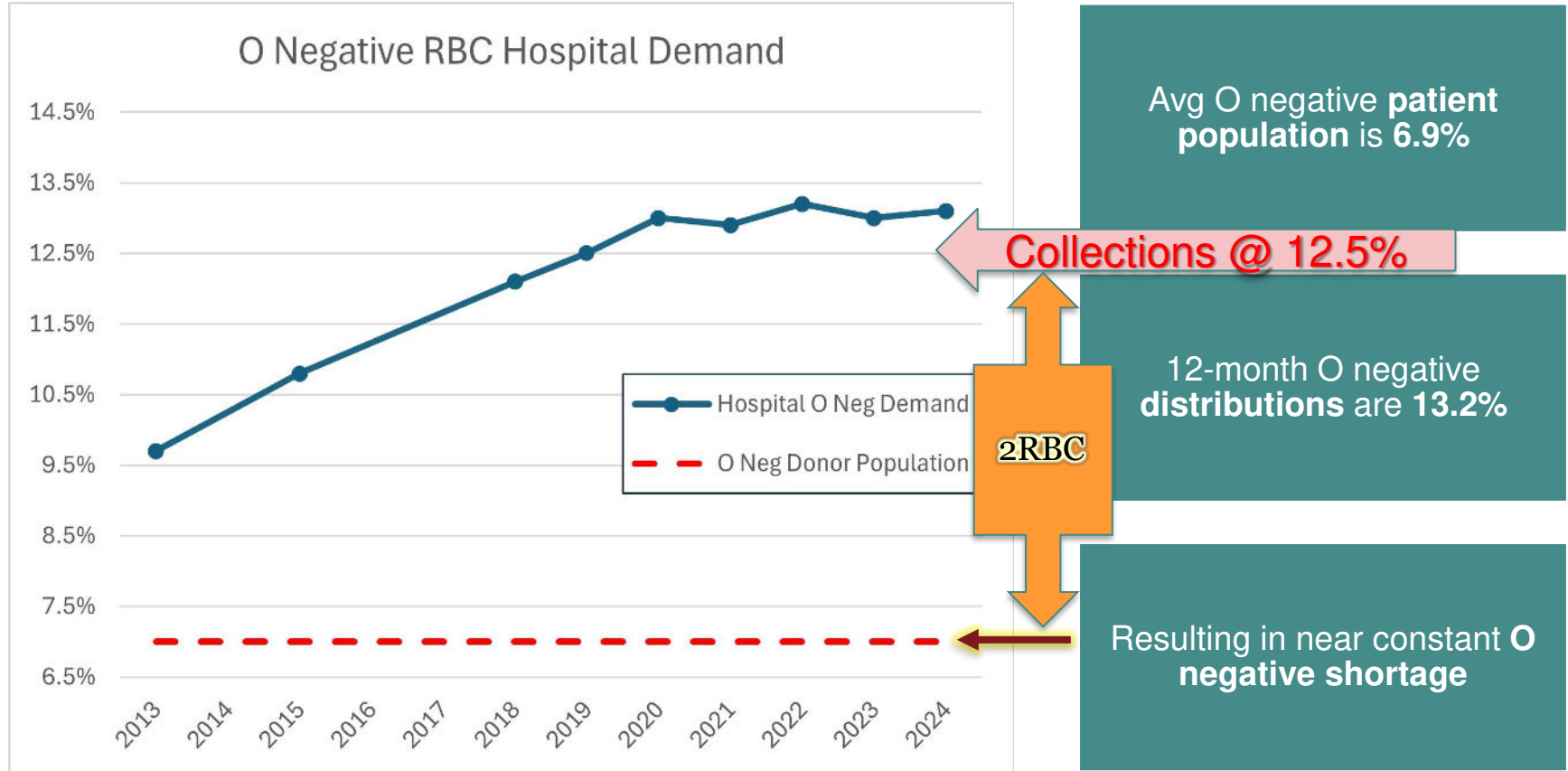
O- Shortages are More Common than O+



- **O negative supplies have not experienced optimal levels since 2021, an anomaly associated with strong donor turnout during the pandemic**

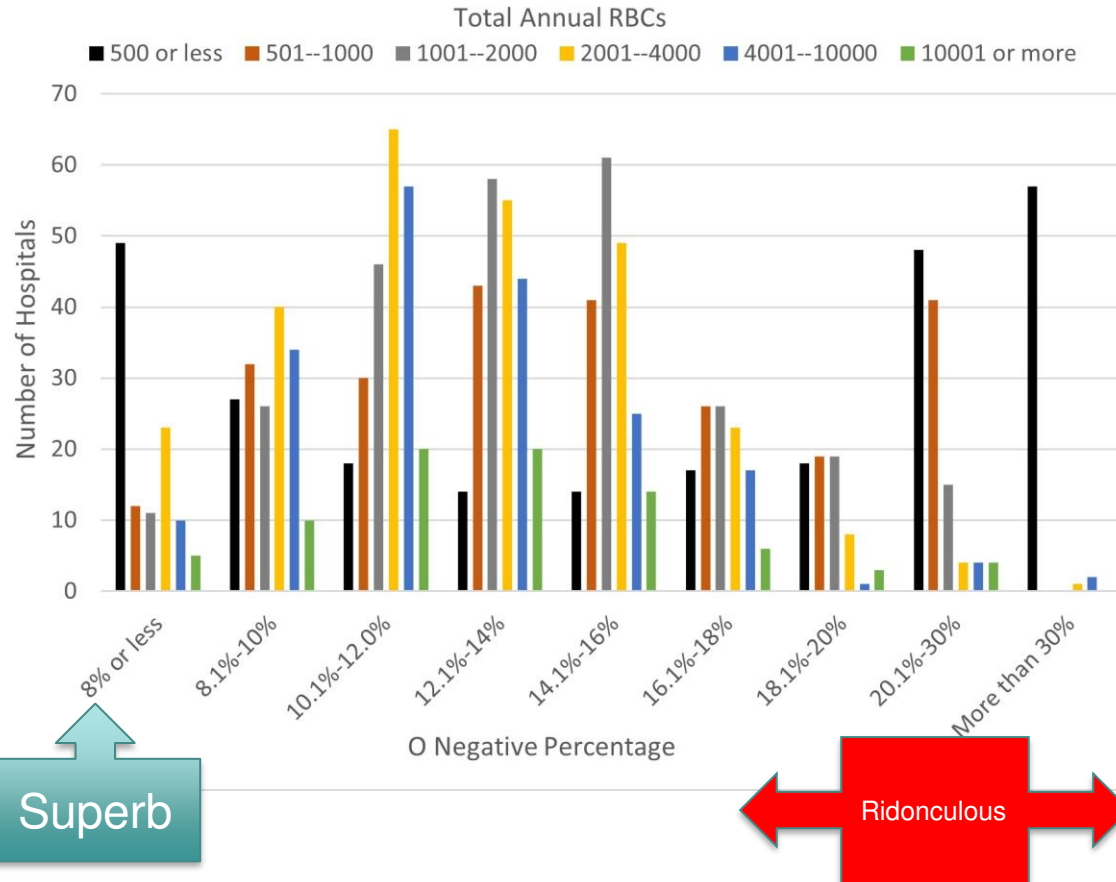
Red Cross O Negative Hospital Demand

Steadily Increasing Over the Past Decade



O Negative Distributions

- **ARC data shows that significant variation**
 - Whether analyzed by hospital size, hospital type (trauma, pediatrics, general hospital, etc.)
 - We always find some hospitals with low O negative utilization rates (less than 8%!), some with high rates



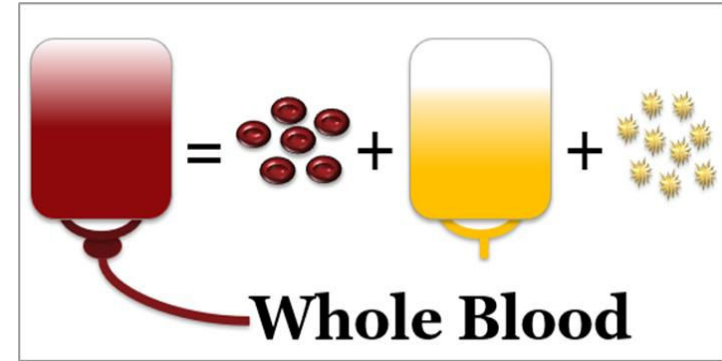


American
Red Cross

Cold-Stored Low Titer O Whole Blood

What is LTOWB?

- LTOWB is whole blood product collected from a single group O donor
- Allows transfusion of all components simultaneously to one patient
- Primary indication is for treatment of **bleeding emergencies in adult trauma patients**



LTOWB

- Blood inventory challenges at a forward operating base

Early success of DC Fire and EMS Whole Blood program saves lives

September 26, 2024 • Iain Hoey



DC Whole Blood program achieves 91.8% survival rate for non-cardiac arrest patients



Source: U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sergeant Christopher Boltz



Source: U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Sandra Welch

'It's going to save lives' | Grady EMS now performing blood transfusions in the field

Grady EMS Quick Response Vehicles started carrying donor blood on March 17.



**American
Red Cross**

<https://fireandsafetyjournalamericas.com/early-success-of-dc-fire-and-ems-whole-blood-program-saves-lives/>

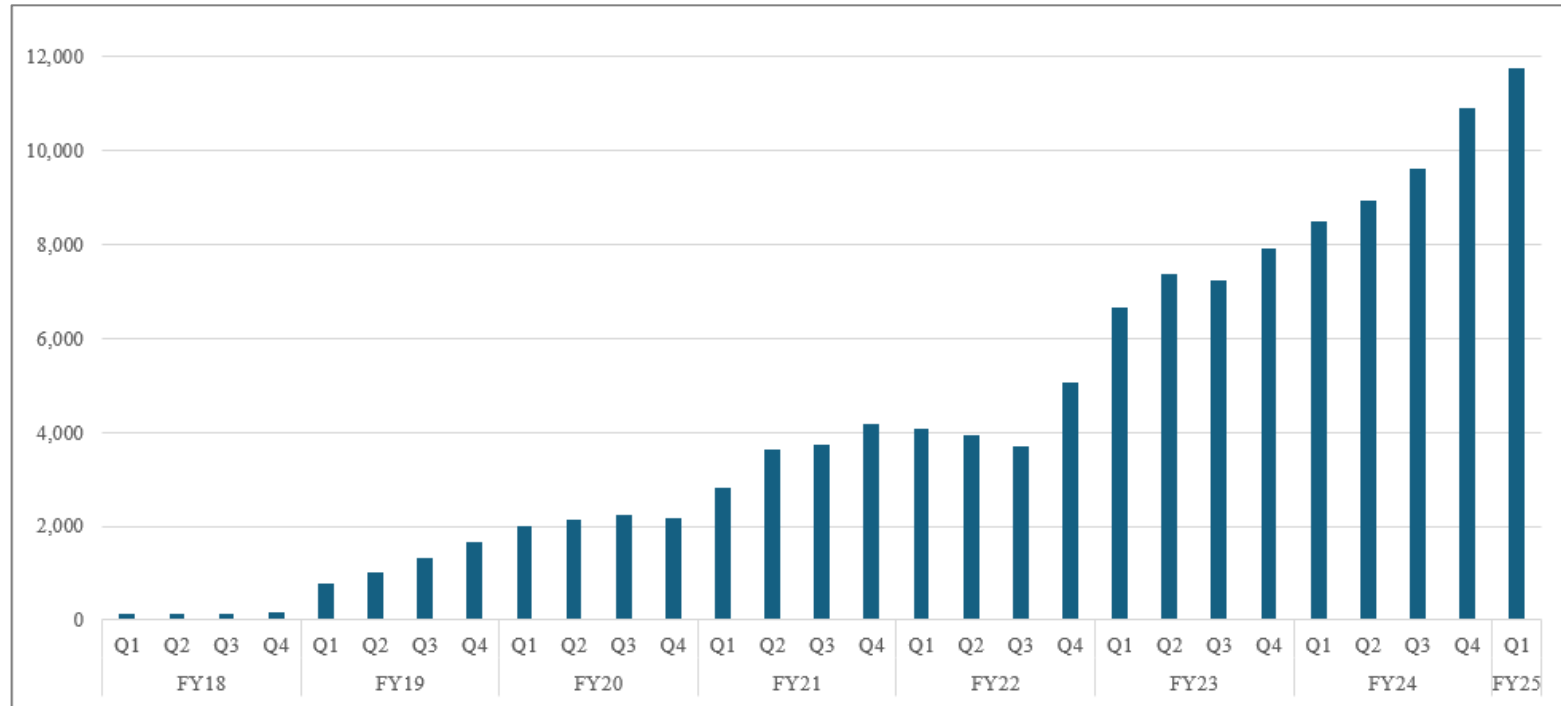
<https://www.11alive.com/article/news/local/grady-ems-now-performing-blood-transfusions-in-the-field/85-f8be7e72-539c-4ced-8f77-e4d1df611009>

Specifications for LTOWB

- Group O positive
- 500 ml, collected in CPD
- TRALI mitigated, aspirin-free donors
- Cold-stored at 1-6°C without agitation
- 21-day shelf life, 5 days fresh
- Low-titer for anti-A and anti-B (1:200)
- Leukoreduced with platelet-sparing filter
- TRALI mitigated from aspirin-free donor

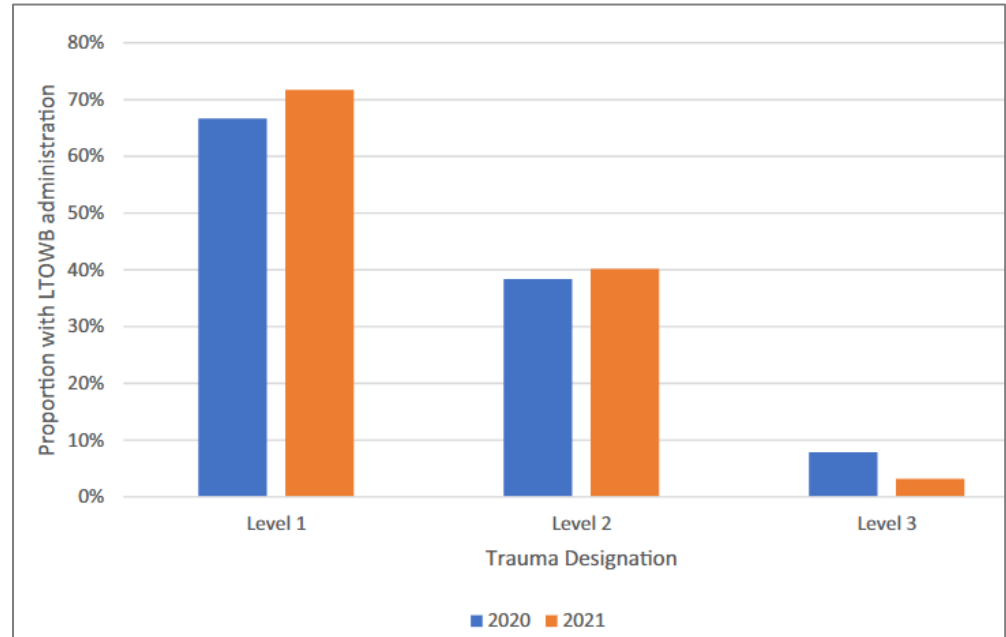


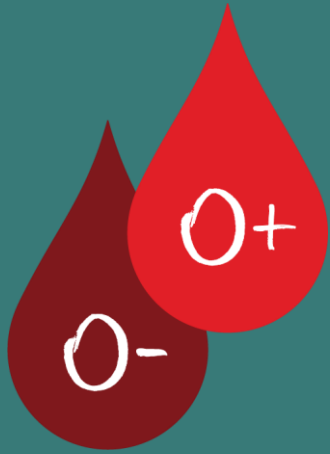
LTOWB Distributions Over Time



LTOWB Growth

- In 2021, 72% of Level I trauma centers and 40% of Level II Trauma centers reported LTOWB administration
 - American College of Surgeons Trauma Quality Improvement Program (TQIP) database





Examine O-neg overuse as a contributor to O-neg shortages

Examining O Negative Overuse

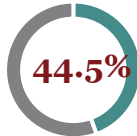
Recent studies indicate a shortage of O negative blood product, stems from **significant overuse** when the type was not required for transfusion.



GROUP Study¹: 43.2% O negative units given to non-O negative recipients.



Stanford Study²: 67% O negative units transfused to non-O negative recipients.



Optimus Study³: 44.5% O negative transfusions could have used O positive.

GROUP
Study
attributes top
reasons for
overuse to:

- emergency transfusion
- unit near expiration
- meet antigen negative requirement

1. Zeller MP, Barty R, Aandahl A, et al. An international investigation into O red blood cell unit administration in hospitals: the Group O Utilization Patterns (GROUP) study. *Transfusion* 2017;57:2329-37
2. Virk MS, et al. Optimizing O-negative RBC utilization using a data-driven approach. *Transfusion*. 60:4. Apr 2020: 739-746.
3. Dunbar NM, Yazer MH, for the BEST Collaborative. O- product transfusion, inventory management, and utilization during shortage: The OPTIMUS study. *Transfusion* 2018;58: 1348-55.

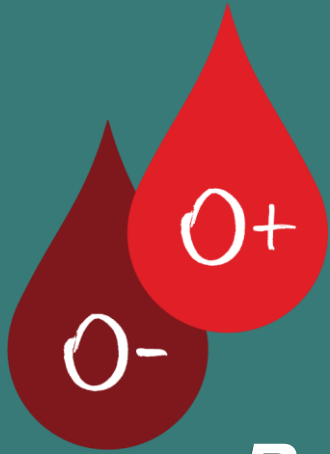
Summary on O Negative Overuse

- O negative red blood cells are in **chronic short supply** and must be reserved for O negative patients.
 - Especially ♀ of Child Bearing Potential (CBP)
- Less than 7% of the population is O negative and declining as the U.S. population becomes increasingly more diverse
- The demand for O negative blood is nearly double the patient population

Unsustainable !



O negative
Patient & Donor



Review industry guidance on use of Group O red blood cells

AABB Best Practice Guidelines- Key Recommendations for TS

O-neg RBCs should be reserved for 3 cohorts of females of CBP



Advancing Transfusion and
Cellular Therapies Worldwide

Association Bulletin #19-02

Date: June 26, 2019
UPDATED JULY 2022

To: AABB Members

From: Michael Murphy, MD, FRCP, FRCPath, FFPPath - President
Debra BenAvram - Chief Executive Officer

Re: Recommendations on the Use of Group O Red Blood Cells

Association Bulletins provide a mechanism for publication of documents that have been approved by the Board of Directors for distribution to individual and institutional members, such as:

- Standards that were adopted after publication of the most recent edition of *Standards*.
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- Guidance, recommendations, and reports that have been developed by AABB Committees or National Office staff for distribution to members.

1. Group O Rh(D)-negative,

2. Rh(D)- negative requiring transfusion
when type-specific blood is unavailable

3. Unk. blood type who require RBCs before
completion of pretransfusion testing

Choose Wisely Campaign

The American Board of Internal Medicine's *Choosing Wisely* campaign incorporated AABB recommendations on O negative use. The campaign was designed to help physicians and patients engage in conversations to reduce the overuse of tests and procedures.



Five Things Physicians and Patients Should Question

- 1 Don't transfuse more units of blood than absolutely necessary.**
Each unit of blood carries risks. A restrictive threshold (7.0-8.0g/dL) should be used for the vast majority of hospitalized, stable patients without evidence of inadequate tissue oxygenation (evidence supports a threshold of 8.0g/dL in patients with pre-existing cardiovascular disease). Transfusion decisions should be influenced by symptoms and hemoglobin concentration. Single unit red cell transfusions should be the standard for non-bleeding, hospitalized patients. Additional units should only be prescribed after re-assessment of the patient and their hemoglobin value.
- 2 Don't transfuse red blood cells for iron deficiency without hemodynamic instability.**
Blood transfusion has become a routine medical response despite cheaper and safer alternatives in some settings. Pre-operative patients with iron deficiency and patients with chronic iron deficiency without hemodynamic instability (even with low hemoglobin levels) should be given oral and/or intravenous iron.
- 3 Don't routinely use blood products to reverse warfarin.**
Patients requiring reversal of warfarin can often be reversed with vitamin K alone. Prothrombin complex concentrates or plasma should only be used for patients with serious bleeding or requiring emergency surgery.
- 4 Don't perform serial blood counts on clinically stable patients.**
Transfusion of red blood cells or platelets should be based on the first laboratory value of the day unless the patient is bleeding or otherwise unstable. Multiple blood draws to recheck whether a patient's parameter has fallen below the transfusion threshold (or unnecessary blood draws for other laboratory tests) can lead to excessive phlebotomy and unnecessary transfusions.
- 5 Don't transfuse O negative blood except to O negative patients and in emergencies for women of child bearing potential with unknown blood group.**
O negative blood units are in chronic short supply due in part to overutilization for patients who are not O negative. O negative red blood cells should be restricted to: (1) O negative patients; or (2) women of childbearing potential with unknown blood group who require emergency transfusion before blood group testing can be performed.

5

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AABB Best Practice Guidelines



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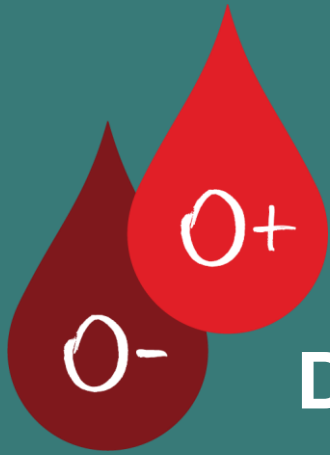
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Hospital transfusion services should closely monitor utilization of O neg inventory,

Develop policies when to switch to Rh(D)-positive RBCs

Protocols for expeditious sample collection to switch to type-specific blood

Policies using Rh+ RBCs during times of critical inventory levels



**Discuss strategies hospitals can
employ to reduce overutilization of O
negative red blood cells**

Is it safe to use O Positive in an emergency?

Evidence supports that administering Rh positive red blood cells or whole blood in emergencies is low risk.

- **Alloimmunization is a risk with any transfusion, even with O negative blood**
- Most patients are Rh positive (85% and increasing)
- In the 15% of patients who are Rh negative, risk of anti-D alloimmunization after Rh positive transfusion is 21-26%¹
 - Risk is even lower (less than 10%) in immunocompromised marrow and solid organ transplant patients¹
 - Overall risk of anti-D alloimmunization when using O positive for emergencies is between 3% and 6%, as most patients are Rh positive¹
- Evidence supports exposure to greater number of Rh-positive units does not increase alloimmunization risk²

1. <https://www.aabb.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/resources/association-bulletins/ab19-02.pdf>

2. Seheult JN, et al. Rate of D-alloimmunization in trauma does not depend on the number of RhD-positive units transfused: The BEST collaborative study. Transfusion. 2022;62:S135-S192.

3. Selleng K, et al. Emergency transfusion of patients with unknown blood type with blood group O Rhesus D positive red blood cell concentrates: a prospective, single-centre, observational study. Lancet Haematol. 2017 May;4(5):e218-e224.

What if the patient already has anti-D?

- Risk of non-ABO hemolytic reaction after an emergency uncrossmatched transfusion is **very low**
- Non-ABO hemolytic reactions may occur **even with O negative red blood cells** (anti-Jka, anti-K, etc.)
- IgG anti-D causes **extravascular** hemolysis, which is usually **mild**

| Study | Number of Recipients | Number of Uncrossmatched Erythrocyte Units Issued | Rate of Hemolysis | Rate of New Antibody Formation |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mulay, 2012 ¹⁷ | 1,407 | 4,144 | 1/1,407 (0.02%) | 7/232* (3%) |
| Radkay, 2012 ⁶ | 218 | 1,065 | 1/218 (0.5%) | 4/218 (1.8%) |
| Miraflor, 2011 ¹⁵ | 132 | 1,570 | 1/132 (0.8%) | 1/132 |
| Goodell, 2010 ¹⁸ | 262 | 1,002 | 1/262 (0.4%) | Not reported |
| Ball, 2009 ¹⁹ | 153 | 511 | 0 | Not reported |
| Dutton, 2005 ¹⁴ | 161 | 581 | 0 | 1/161 (0.6%) |
| Unkle, 1991 ²⁰ | 135 | Not reported | 0 | 3/135 (2.2%) |
| Lefebvre, 1987 ²¹ | 133 | 537 | 0 | Not reported |
| Schwab, 1986 ²² | 99 | 410 | 0 | Not reported |
| Gervin, 1984 ²³ | 160 | 875 | 0 | Not reported |
| Blumberg, 1978 ²⁴ | 46 | 221 | 0 | Not reported |
| Total | 2,906 | 10,916 | 4/2,906 (0.1%) | 16/878 (1.8%) |

Incidence of hemolysis and alloimmunization after emergency-release uncrossmatched blood transfusion in civilian centers.
 * Denominator includes only patients with a subsequent antibody screen available.

Liver Transplants Protective against Anti-D

TABLE 2 Studies investigating anti-D formation in RhD-negative patients, who underwent liver transplantation and who were transfused with RhD-positive RBCs.

| Year of publication | Country | No of patients with follow-up of at least 1 month | No of patients with anti-D | Immunosuppression | Ref. |
|---------------------|---------|---|----------------------------|--|-----------|
| 1989 | USA | 19 | 3 ^a | cyclosporine, corticosteroids, ALG ^b , OKT3 | 9 |
| 1991 | Sweden | 3 | 0 | not specified | 26 |
| 1994 | Spain | 17 | 0 | cyclosporine, corticosteroids, ALG, OKT3 | 10 |
| 2008 | USA | 15 | 0 | MMF ^c , tacrolimus, sirolimus, corticosteroids | 11 |
| 2016 | France | 22 | 2 ^d | tacrolimus, basiliximab, cyclosporine, MMF, corticosteroids | 13 |
| 2020 | India | 21 | 0 | MMF, tacrolimus, corticosteroids | 12 |
| 2022 | USA | 19 ^e | 0 | ATG ^f , basiliximab, tacrolimus, MMF, corticosteroids | 7 |
| 2022 | USA | 17 | 0 | ATG, basiliximab, tacrolimus, MMF, corticosteroids | 14 |
| 2024 | USA | 16 ^g | 0 | ATG, basiliximab, tacrolimus, MMF, cyclosporine, corticosteroids, azathioprine | 21 |
| 2024 | Germany | 30 | 2 ^e | basiliximab, tacrolimus, corticosteroids | Our study |

^aTwo presumably pre-existing boosted anti-D, no further information about the third patient. Anti-D occurred in patients after LT. Number of patients who underwent other organ transplantations was not specified.

^bRabbit antilymphocyte globulin.

^cMycophenolate mofetil.

^dTransient anti-D.

^eNo clear information about the timeline of antibody screening testing after transfusion.

^fAntithymocyte globulin.

^gSix further patients underwent other or multiorgan transplantation.

Arora, K., Kelley, J., Sui, D., Ning, J., Martinez, F., Lichtiger, B. and Tholpady, A. (2017), Cancer type predicts alloimmunization following RhD-incompatible RBC transfusions. *Transfusion*, 57: 952-958.

Certain Hematologic Malignancies??Protective?? against Anti-D

TABLE 2. Univariate logistic regression results

| Variable | No. (%) | | | OR | 95% CI | p value* |
|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|------|-----------|----------|
| | Total, N = 545 | Nonresponders, N = 469 | Responders, N = 76 | | | |
| Diagnosis† | | | | | | |
| Acute leukemia | 137 (25.14) | 128 (93.43) | 9 (6.57) | | | |
| Myeloproliferative neoplasms | 22 (4.04) | 21 (95.45) | 1 (4.55) | 0.68 | 0.01-5.36 | 1.0000 |
| Plasma cell disorders/myeloma | 30 (5.50) | 25 (83.33) | 5 (16.67) | 2.71 | 0.66-9.93 | 0.1792 |
| Lymphomas | 91 (16.70) | 90 (98.90) | 1 (1.10) | 0.16 | 0.00-1.18 | 0.0868 |
| Carcinomas, melanomas, sarcomas | 235 (43.12) | 182 (77.45) | 53 (22.55) | 4.13 | 1.93-9.87 | < 0.0001 |
| MDS | 30 (5.50) | 23 (76.67) | 7 (23.33) | 4.28 | 1.22-14.4 | 0.0216 |

* The overall p value for diagnosis is 0.0009.

† Exact logistic regression models.

What about Females of Childbearing Potential?

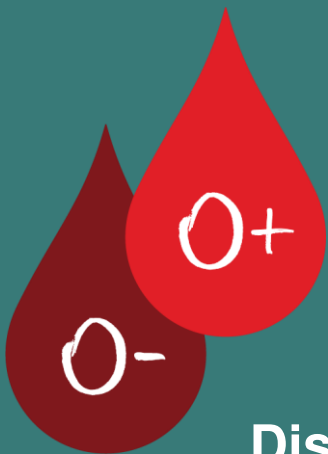
Addressing concerns for potential risk of Hemolytic Disease of the Fetus and Newborn (HDFN) with future pregnancy

The risk of fatal HDFN after Rh positive transfusion in an RhD negative female of childbearing potential has been estimated to be ~0.3%

Developing policies to follow up and educate Rh negative females of childbearing potential after Rh positive transfusions can help to ensure proper care for future pregnancies



- Yazer MH., et al. It is time to reconsider the risks of transfusing RhD negative females of childbearing potential with RhD positive red blood cells in bleeding emergencies. *Transfusion*. 2019;59:3794–9.
- Malone JR. Ethical considerations in the use of RhD-positive blood products in trauma. *Transfusion*. 2024;64:S4–S1.

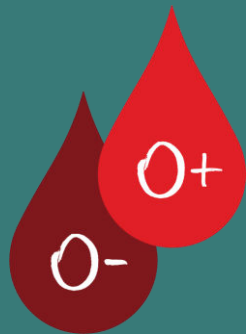


**Discuss strategies hospitals can employ to reduce
overutilization of O negative red blood cells:**

KnOw Where Your O's GO

O Negative Tip: Know Where Your Os Go

Benchmark data are not widely available to guide hospitals in what is appropriate group O Rh(D)-negative usage.



Hospitals should routinely conduct group O audits to better understand usage patterns, identify potential overutilization of Group O blood and develop policies for appropriate usage for their institution.

How to Perform an O Negative Audit

Start by evaluating all O negative units transfused to non-O negative patients during a defined timeframe that makes sense for your hospital.

How many units were transfused to non-O negative recipients?

Were there any situations where another type could have been used?

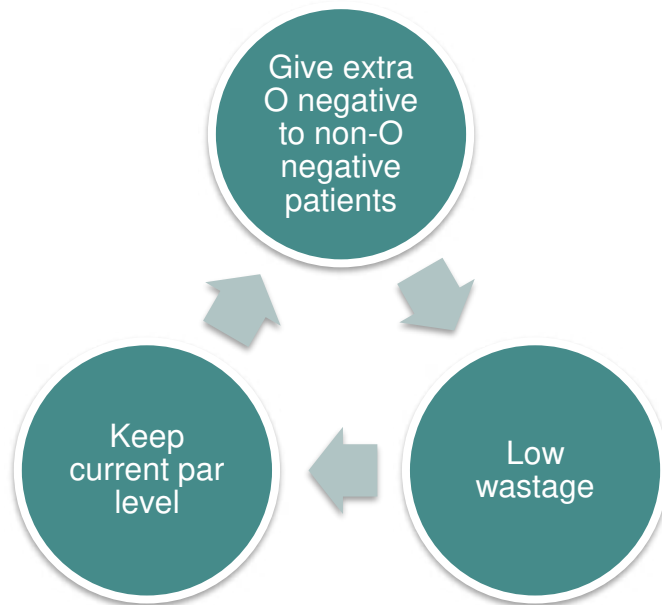


O Negative Tip: Know Where Your Os Go

O negative audits are a great way to better understand utilization patterns and identify potential ways to reduce O negative rates



- **Low O negative expiration rates do not tell the whole story**
- Routinely transfusing non-O negative patients with short-dated O negative units is a form of wastage

Cycle of Overutilization



1. Optimizing O-negative RBC utilization using a data-driven approach. *Transfusion*. 60:4. Apr 2020: 739-746.
2. Hirani R, Wong J, Diaz P, et al. A national review of the clinical use of group O D– red blood cell units. *Transfusion* 2017;57:1254-61.

Optimizing O-negative RBC utilization using a data-driven approach

Mrigender S. Virk ^{1,2} David Lancaster,³ Thinh Quach,² Albert Lim,² Elaine Shu,³
Geoffrey Belanger,³ and Tho D. Pham ^{1,2,3}

TRANSFUSION 2020;60;739–746

The study found that shorter dated O negative units were more likely to be given to non-O negative recipients.

- Number of units transfused later in shelf-life correlated with inappropriate O negative RBC usage (O negative into Non-O negative patients = ONiNON)
- Gradually reducing O negative inventory levels successfully reduced late and inappropriate O negative transfusions
- O negative patients were not impacted
 - No increase in ad-hoc O negative orders

Optimizing O-negative RBC utilization using a data-driven approach

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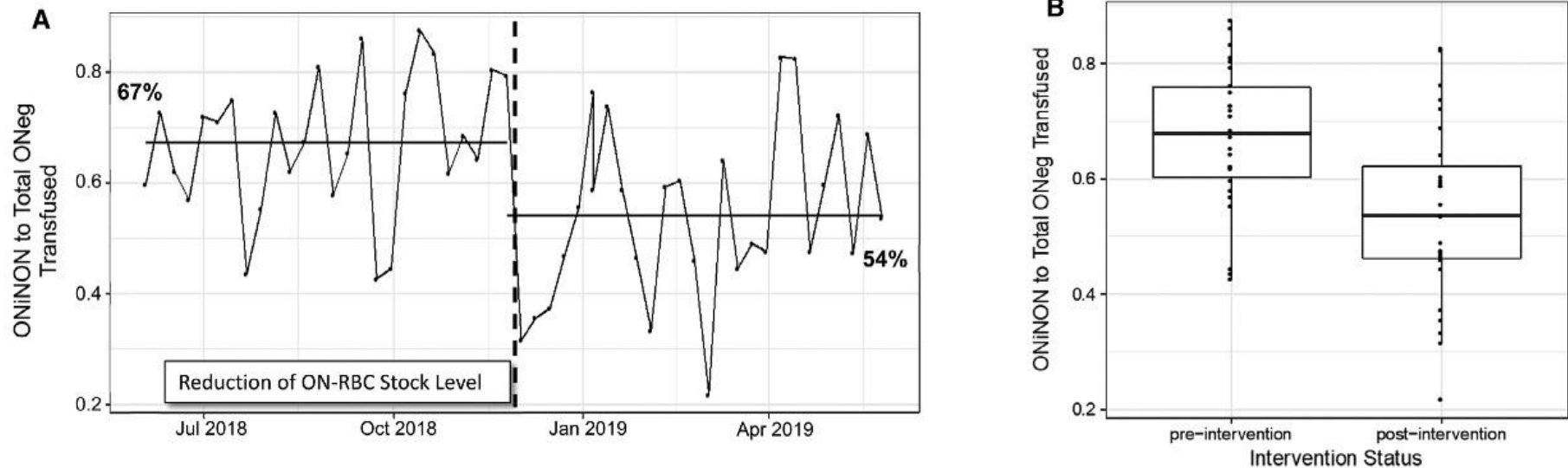


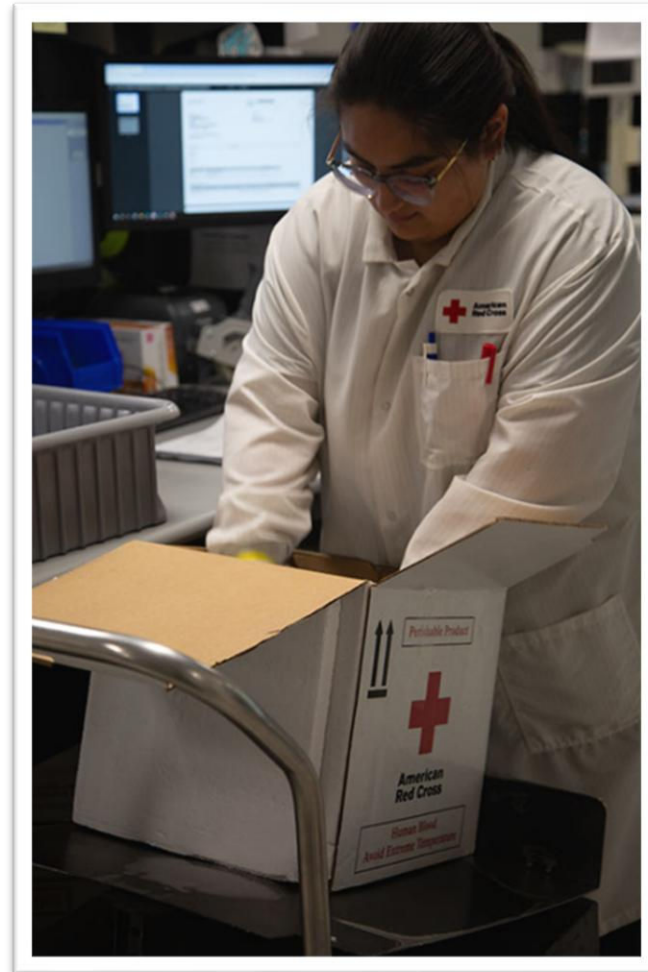
Fig. 4. Change in percent of O-neg RBCs transfused to non-O-neg patients (ONiNON) pre and post intervention. (A) line graph with weekly average points, (B) box-whisker plot representation. 67% versus 54%, $p = 0.00352$, Wilcoxon rank sum test.

O Negative Transfers

Short date transfers can be another source of wastage.

- Transferring short-dated units to a hospital partner that is more likely to be able to use them may be a good stewardship practice in some cases
- High transfer rates may also contribute to high wastage rates at the transfer partner if they can't be used for O negative patients
- Transfers should not be considered a substitute for right-sizing O negative inventory

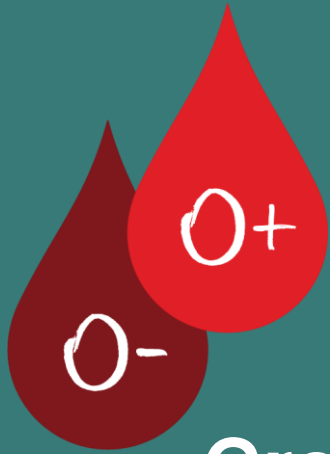
Expand your audit to include O negative transfers and whether they were transfused to O negative patients at the receiving hospital



Common O Negative Audit Findings



| O Negative Transfusions | Potential Intervention |
|---|---|
| Emergency/MTP: Female of childbearing potential with unknown blood type | None needed |
| Routine: O Negative patient, Rh negative patient | None needed |
| Emergency/MTP: Male or female beyond childbearing potential with unknown blood type | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Does your hospital have SOPs that allow use of O positive for these patients? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If so, are staff on all shifts familiar with the policies? Sample SOPs are available by request |
| Routine: Non-O Negative patient, unit nearing expiration | O\ominus par level/inventory level may be too high: consider gradually \downarrow O\ominus orders & monitoring |
| Routine: Non-O negative patient, clinical physician required O negative unit | Physician education is needed. We can help provide journal articles, AABB best practice guidelines, or educational presentations by request |



**Group O Red Blood Cell Supply is a
shared responsibility**

**What are we (ARC)doing about
this?**

Group O Red Blood Cell Supply Initiative

a shared responsibility

Fixed Site Expansion

- Donors have confirmed a preference for fixed site collections over mobiles.
- Enhanced capacity to meet type-specific product goals, through improved collections predictability.



Donor Recruitment and Retention

- Increased donor satisfaction, frequency, and retention through improved drive predictability, & site comfort.

Find New & Innovative Ways to Touch Donors



STYLE

The New York Times

Want This Snoopy T-Shirt? You'll Have to Pay in Blood.

The Red Cross teamed up with "Peanuts" for an April blood drive and a T-shirt promoting the campaign has become an unexpectedly hot commodity online.



Give this article

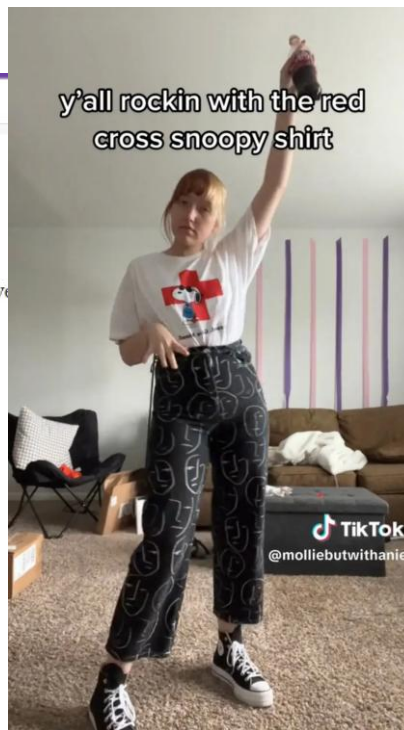


"I was like, I need this shirt," she said.

Cristina Perez, a college student in Pennsylvania, was one of many social media users who booked a blood-donation appointment after seeing the tie-in T-shirt in an online video.



By Callie Holtermann and Madison Malone Kircher



American
Red Cross

Group O Red Blood Cell Supply Initiative

a shared responsibility

Power Red Growth

- Optimizing the number of units collected at each donation.
- Attracting right type donors,
 - 2RBC donations are ideal for A negative B negative & Group O donors.
 - Offsets a declining and changing donor base.

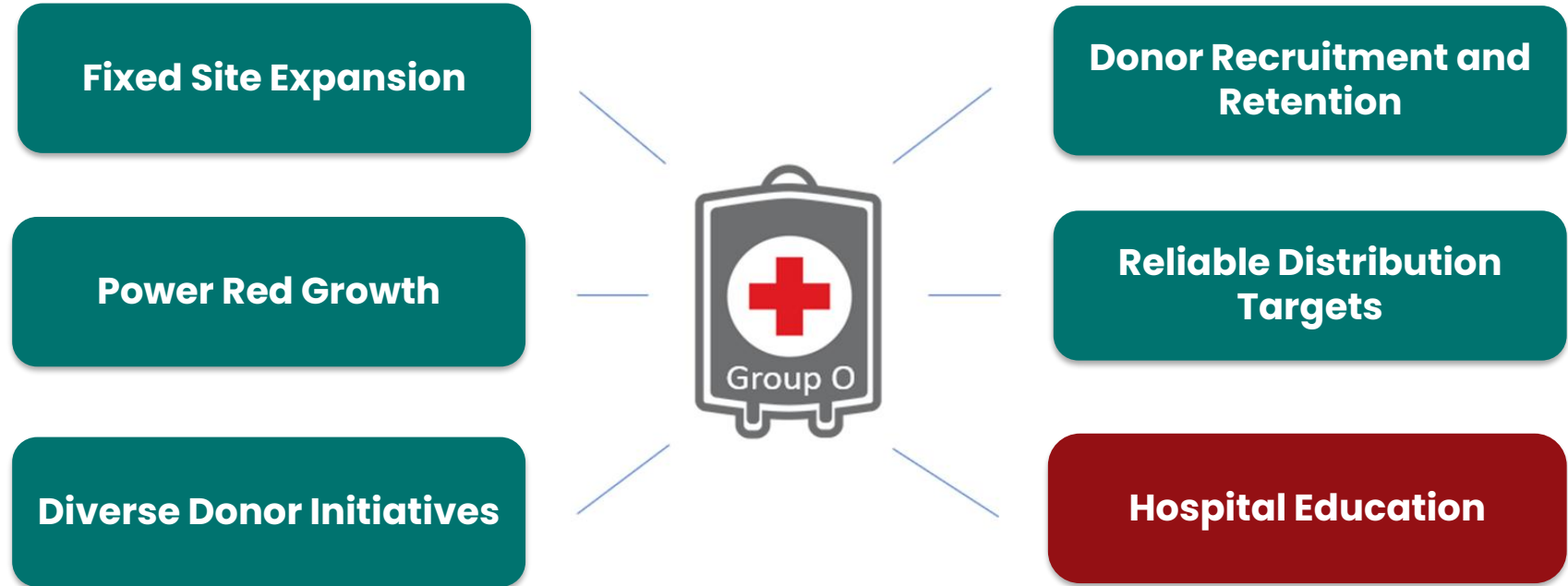


Diverse Donor Initiatives

- As the population in the United States changes, the Red Cross is building a more diverse blood supply through outreach and engagement
 - (e.g. Black/African American and Latino Community.)
- Provide more type-specific antigen-negative units.

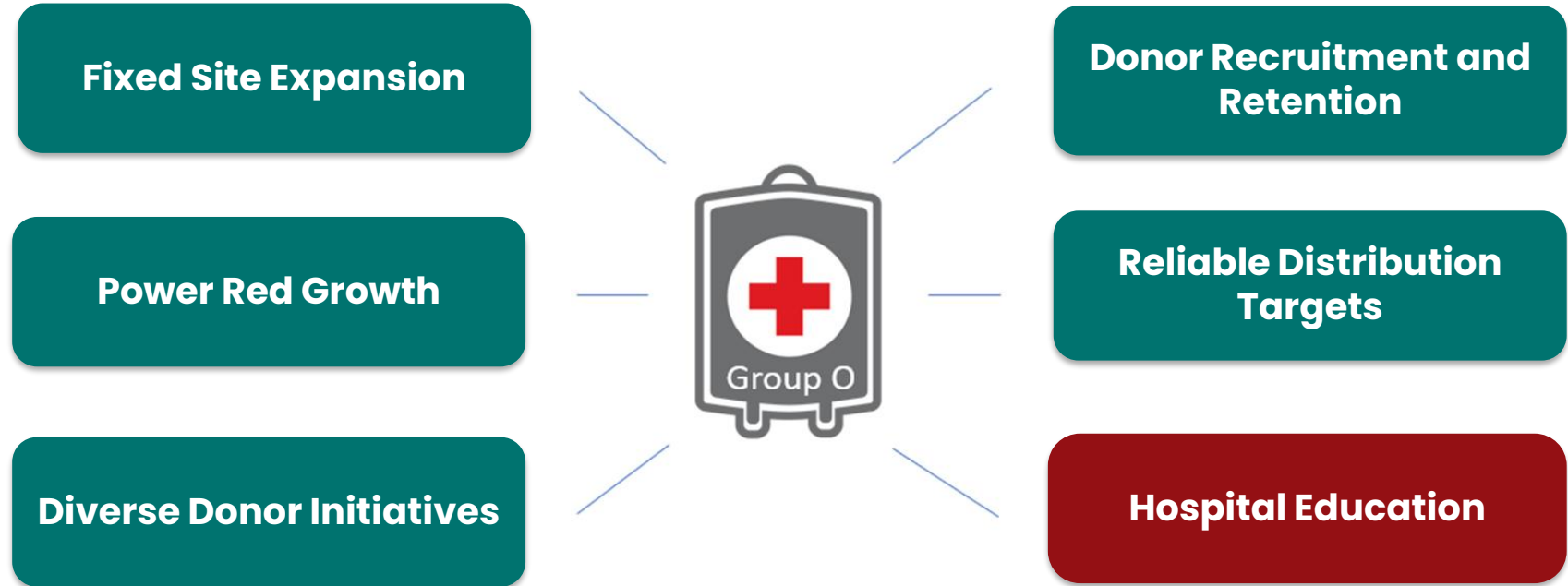
Group O Red Blood Cell Supply Initiative

a shared responsibility



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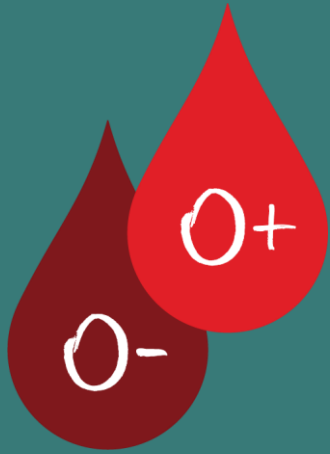
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 - Guidance, recommendatio...
- AABB Committees or Na...

Key Recommendations for Blood Centers

1. Collection facilities should work with hospital clients to develop reasonable targets for group O usage.
2. Collection facilities can work with hospital clients to develop ways to encourage optimal use of group O Rh(D)-negative RBCs.
3. Collection facilities should create a policy to address product inventory shortages.¹⁷



Empower Group O Care Resources

Empower Group O Care Ongoing Education

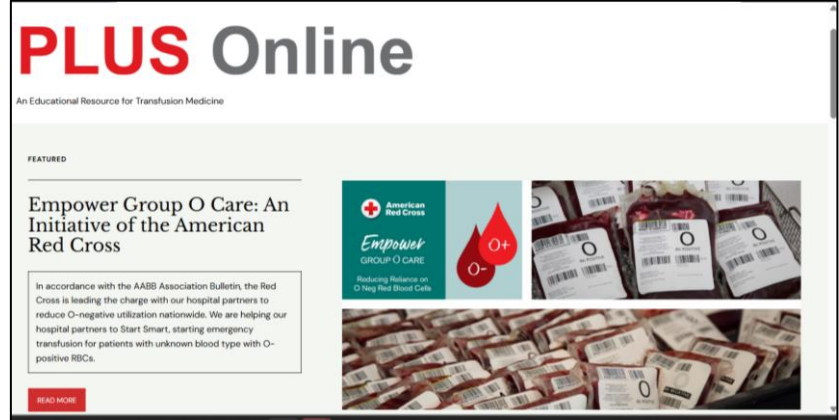
Next up on SUCCESS®

May 15, 1:00pm CST

Empower Group O Care:
Gaining Insights Through
Group O Auditing



[Success Online](#)



<https://redcrossplus.blog/>

Continued outreach and support will be provided through (See above) &:

- Red Cross Medical Office
- Hospital Newsletter
- Business Reviews
- [RedCrossBlood.org](https://redcrossblood.org)

Evidence-Based *Empower* Group O Modules



Start Smart

- Evidence-based guidance to start with O positive for emergency transfusions in adult males and females beyond childbearing potential with unknown blood type



Switch Sooner

- Policies on when to transition O negative patients or females of childbearing potential with unknown blood type to O positive to avoid depleting O negative inventory



Know Where Your Os Go

- Tools and resources to conduct group O audits to better understand utilization patterns, and find ways to reduce O negative rates



Safe Choices

- Examining the risks of using O positive RBCs for emergency transfusion, including females of childbearing potential and patients with anti-D



Right Type Focus

- Guidance for implementing routine practices to order type-specific antigen-negative units in advance of a transfusion



These resources are available to enable hospital Group O education.

[Empower Group O Care Poster](#)

[Group O Stewardship Tip 3: Know Where Your O's Go](#)

[Group O Red Cell Citation List and Overview](#)

[AABB Bulletin](#)

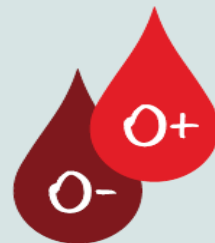
Sample policies and procedures are available upon request. Contact your Red Cross Medical Director for more information.

Full Resource Library on [RedCrossBlood.org/HPRG](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org/HPRG)



American
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Empower GROUP  CARE



Everyone Plays a Part



Every hospital using 1 *less* O negative unit
equals more units available for the patients that need it most.

Facts in Review

- O negative population in the U.S is 6.9% and declining
- Fewer people donate blood today than in the past
- An estimated 85% of all hospital patients are Rh positive
- Most trauma patients are male
- Less than 5% of patients with Sickle Cell disease are O negative
- As most patients are Rh positive, the overall risk of anti-D alloimmunization is 3 – 6% when using O positive for emergencies
- A transfusion should never be withheld from a bleeding patient

We must work together to reduce our reliance on O negative blood and safely use O positive blood for emergency transfusions.

Red Cross Staff @ Your Disposal

Thank you

Kurt Domeier

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**American
Red Cross**

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➤ **888-611-5652**
- Weekday Evenings 5 PM-8 AM,
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➤ **888-908-6618**