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**ACTION REQUIRED**

Further Information - Changes to the Provision of CMV Seronegative Blood Products

Customer Letter # 2017-36

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2017-09-06

Dear Customer:

As previously communicated in customer letter 2017-22, the National Advisory Committee on Blood and Blood Products (NAC) updated their [recommendations](#) on the use of Cytomegalovirus (CMV) seronegative blood products, as of 2017-02-14.

**Effective 2017-10-23**, Canadian Blood Services will stop testing donor blood for anti-CMV antibodies except for a small inventory of blood components tested for the sole purpose of intrauterine transfusion. As the number of units tested will be very small, there is no opportunity to fill orders for CMV seronegative products outside of the single approved indication. All orders for CMV seronegative components for stock inventory and/or for patients with indications other than intrauterine transfusion will be filled with CMV safe (pre-storage leukoreduced) components.

**Reference materials**

There are several sources of reference information regarding this change in testing strategy that our hospital colleagues may find useful. Hospital colleagues are invited and encouraged to use the video or either slide deck (with or without audio) for in house hospital information purposes.

1. A video (11:04 min) recorded by Dr. Jeannie Callum, BA, MD, FRCPC, University of Toronto: <https://youtu.be/Cw746m78X3U>
2. An extended version slide deck with audio (25:06 min): <https://youtu.be/rcwYqdwzplc>
3. An extended version slide deck without audio. [https://professionaleducation.blood.ca/sites/msi/files/transfusion-transmitted\\_cytomegalovirus\\_2017\\_july.pptx](https://professionaleducation.blood.ca/sites/msi/files/transfusion-transmitted_cytomegalovirus_2017_july.pptx)

Links to the video and slide decks can also be found on Canadian Blood Services' Professional Education website. <https://professionaleducation.blood.ca/en/transfusion/best-practices/use-cytomegalovirus-cmv-seronegative-blood-products>

4. The NAC website includes a list of published [references](#).

**Inventory, ordering, and changes to order forms**

To support hospitals that perform intrauterine transfusions, for each hospital, Canadian Blood Services will maintain an inventory at their local Canadian Blood Services site, of two units of group O Rh negative CMV seronegative red blood cell (RBC) units that will also be C, E, and K antigen negative, and less than 5 days of age. These units may be ordered using the updated Special Request Order [Form](#)



(1000103456). Note that the Routine Component Order [Form](#) (F040547) will be updated to remove 'CMV Neg' as an option.

We will also offer on-demand testing for RBC units negative for other RBC antigens for intrauterine transfusions only. **The turnaround time for on-demand testing of RBC units negative for other RBC antigens will be 24 hours from the time the request is received at Canadian Blood Services.**

If a CMV seronegative platelet component is required for intrauterine transfusion (apheresis selected or unselected), suitable donors will be tested on demand. **The turnaround time for on-demand testing of platelets will be 24 hours from the time the request is received at Canadian Blood Services.** In urgent situations hospitals may wish to discuss options with their local Canadian Blood Services site.

As Canadian Blood Services will rotate the inventory of CMV seronegative red blood cells to ensure units less than 5 days of age are available for intrauterine transfusion, any hospital may receive an occasional CMV seronegative unit as part of their routine blood order. These units can be used interchangeably with regular (non-CMV tested) inventory.

**Circular of Information changes**

The Red Blood Cells and Platelet [Circulars of Information](#) will be updated to reflect this change as follows:

<i>Last updated August 2017</i>	<i>Last updated October 2017</i>
<p><b>Warnings and precautions</b> For some patients at particularly high risk of severe CMV disease (e.g. fetus requiring an intrauterine transfusion [IUT], or CMV-seronegative recipients of allogeneic, hematopoietic stem cell transplants from CMV-seronegative donors), clinicians may choose, in addition to the use of LR components, to transfuse components from CMV-seronegative donors.</p>	<p><b>Warnings and precautions</b> For a fetus requiring an intrauterine transfusion [IUT], clinicians may choose, in addition to the use of LR components, to transfuse components from CMV-seronegative donors.</p>

This customer letter can also be viewed at [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca) in the "Hospitals" section. If you have questions about this letter, or if you require it in an accessible format, please contact your local hospital liaison specialist.

Sincerely,

Dana Devine, Ph.D.  
Chief Medical & Scientific Officer