



In general, joint replacement surgery carries a certain risk for requiring a blood transfusion post-operatively. You should, however, speak to your orthopedic surgeon who will advise you and help you to make an informed decision. Patients can receive blood one of three ways.

- **Autologous:** Patient donates blood for him/herself.
- **Directed Donor:** Patient chooses a friend or relative with a compatible blood type to donate blood for him/her.
- **Blood Bank:** Patient receives blood from an anonymous donor whose blood has been thoroughly tested by the American Red Cross.

Know Your Options!

Autologous

Your own blood provides the best match for you, and eliminates the risk of viral infections. It will also help conserve the community blood supply. There are some risks, in that your blood iron level will decrease after donation. For this reason, your orthopedic surgeon may prescribe iron supplements. Once you have reached a decision with your orthopedic surgeon to donate your own blood, his office will fax the necessary paperwork to the American Red Cross. About three to four weeks prior to your surgery, the American Red Cross will contact you to schedule your autologous blood donation appointment(s). One unit can be donated at each appointment, with appointments scheduled one week apart. The last donation must be made at least three days, but preferably one week, prior to surgery.

If you do not hear from the American Red Cross, contact your orthopedic surgeon's office first to inquire if the paperwork has been sent. If the paperwork was sent, contact the American Red Cross by calling their autologous blood donation line

1-800-35-BLOOD (1-800-352-5663).

When you speak with the American Red Cross, ask which location would be most convenient for you and what times are available to donate your own blood.

Your blood will be uniquely tagged and transported to Paoli Hospital. It will be stored for you, should you need it during or after your surgery. It is reserved for you until its expiration date, when it will be discarded.

If your surgery is rescheduled, please contact the American Red Cross.

Directed Donor

Although it is appealing to have people close to you donate blood for you, directed donations are not statistically safer than the community blood supply. Blood typing will not be performed prior to donation unless the donor registers as an outpatient and pays a fee for blood typing. Upon testing of donor units, blood that is found to be incompatible with the patient will be released into the general community supply. Directed donor blood will automatically be released to other patients one week after the scheduled surgery date if it has not been used. Directed donations may provide peace of mind for some patients because they know the person who donated the blood. There are still risks. The safety of any donation depends on the donor providing a complete and factual health history. Your friend or family member may feel pressured into making a directed donation, even though they know that their health history may make their blood unsafe.

Donors are screened using a detailed health questionnaire. The blood is collected and tested. If it is unacceptable, it will be discarded.

If your surgery is rescheduled, you must contact the American Red Cross Donor Center at 800-448-3543.

Blood Bank

If it is determined that you need a blood transfusion and you have not donated blood or arranged for a directed donation, you are entitled to receive the necessary unit(s) from Paoli Hospital's blood bank. These blood products have been carefully screened, had blood type confirmed and were processed by the American Red Cross.