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# Clinical Transfusion Handbook updated

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FROM THE SPECIALTIES

TOR AUDUN HERVIG

Tor Audun Hervig, specialist in immunology and transfusion medicine and professor emeritus at the University of Bergen.

The author has completed the ICMJE form and declares the following conflicts of interest: he has undertaken consultancy work for Terumo, Cerus, Pall and Baxter, and has served on the Safety Committee for the ExPlas study at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

MIRJANA GRUJIC ARSENOVIC

Mirjana Grujic Arsenovic, specialist in immunology and transfusion medicine and a senior consultant with responsibility for the Blood Bank at the University Hospital of North Norway

The author has completed the ICMJE form and declares no conflicts of interest.

ÇIĞDEM AKALIN AKKÖK

[uxciak@ous-hf.no](mailto:uxciak@ous-hf.no)

Çiğdem Akalin Akkök PhD, specialist in immunology and transfusion medicine and senior consultant at the National Reference Laboratory for Immunological Investigations, Oslo University Hospital, Ullevål

The author has completed the ICMJE form and declares no conflicts of interest.

BARBORA JACOBSEN

Barbora Jacobsen, specialist in immunology and transfusion medicine and a senior consultant in the Department of Immunology and Transfusion Medicine at St Olav's Hospital, with responsibility for blood bank services

The author has completed the ICMJE form and declares the following conflicts of interest: she has received lecture fees from NTNU, is a member of the haemovigilance group of the Norwegian Medical

Products Agency, and holds positions within the Norwegian Association for Immunology and Transfusion Medicine and the International Haemovigilance Network.

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## **The new edition of the handbook has been published on the metodebok.no portal.**

Transfusion medicine and blood transfusion are essential in patient care, including in the treatment of cancer, haematopoietic stem cell transplantation, solid organ transplantation and severe haemorrhage. Without appropriate transfusion support, many of these treatments would not be possible.

The development of artificial blood cells has been discussed for several decades, but has not yet proved successful [\(1\)](#). Consequently, the altruistic and invaluable contribution of blood donors remains indispensable for ensuring the availability of blood and blood components. However, this is not an unlimited resource. Robust, evidence-based indications for transfusion are therefore needed, not least because transfusion can lead to mild, serious and – albeit rare – fatal complications [\(2\)](#). Many transfusion-related complications are preventable, and adherence to national guidelines will help clinicians make wise choices [\(3\)](#). Unnecessary transfusions should be avoided, but necessary transfusions must not be delayed [\(4\)](#).

The Clinical Transfusion Handbook was previously published by the Norwegian Directorate of Health, but since the third edition (2017), it has been published by the Norwegian Association for Immunology and Transfusion Medicine (NFIT). This change reflects a reorganisation of regional health authorities' responsibilities, whereby the publication of clinical recommendations on transfusion is no longer regarded as part of their remit. The NFIT therefore established an editorial group with representatives from all regional health authorities in Norway to ensure broad national representation in the revision process.

The editorial group has revised the entire handbook on the basis of current literature and guidelines from countries with well-developed, up-to-date, evidence-based guidelines on transfusion medicine. The chapter structure has been revised to improve usability, and keyword indexes, cross-references to relevant chapters, and references to the scientific literature and source materials have been added both within the text and at the end of each chapter.

Publication of this edition on metodebok.no was funded by the Norwegian Medical Association's Quality Improvement Fund. The digital format means that the handbook is easily accessible to healthcare personnel throughout Norway and allows rapid correction of any errors.

Transfusion medicine is a dynamic field, and we recognise that medical recommendations can change over time. The handbook will therefore be continuously updated and refined after publication in response to emerging evidence, new literature and feedback from readers. We therefore welcome feedback from users on the content and suggestions for additional topics for inclusion.

The handbook provides background information and recommendations. Clinical practice should take account of local circumstances. It is not intended as a textbook; it addresses common transfusion-related issues encountered in routine clinical practice, which are not always covered in standard textbooks. Different approaches are used in certain areas of practice, and we have sought to present a balanced view based on relevant international literature.

Clinicians have previously reported that the Clinical Transfusion Handbook has been a valuable resource in their daily work. We hope that this edition will be used just as extensively.

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