



301 Prospect Avenue
Syracuse, New York 13203

Pre- Operative Anemia Management Patient Guide

What is anemia?

Anemia is a very common blood disorder that occurs when the level of healthy red blood cells (RBC's) in the body becomes too low. This can lead to health problems because RBC's contain **hemoglobin**, which carries oxygen to the body's tissues.

How will I know if I am anemic?

Anemia is diagnosed by a blood test called a complete blood cell (CBC) count, which your doctor may send you for today.

What is blood conservation and why does my doctor want me to be involved?

Now that you are being scheduled for surgery, your doctor would like to decrease the chance that you will need a blood transfusion before, during, or after surgery. Blood loss during surgery is expected, so if you are already anemic, and your RBC's are too low before surgery, the possibility that you would need a blood transfusion could be very high.

A Blood Conservation Program has been started at St. Joseph's Hospital to help take care of patients who would prefer not to receive blood while they are in the hospital. The pre-operative anemia management program for orthopedic patients is a great way to reduce the chance that you will need a blood transfusion as part of your care after your surgery.

What will I have to do before surgery?

After your blood is drawn, the results will be sent to the Blood Conservation Program at St. Joseph's Hospital. If your RBC's are too low, or your iron levels are too low, you will be able to come to the hospital to receive medications that will help your body make more red blood cells. A nurse will call you and make an appointment for you to come to the hospital outpatient infusion area before the date of your surgery. Depending on your lab results 1-3 weekly infusions may be needed. The appointment will last 2-3 hours each.

Medications you might receive:

IV Iron: an iron product that is administered through a vein. Iron is a mineral needed by your body to make new red blood cells. Iron also helps red blood cells function.

Vitamins/Minerals: Your body also needs good levels of **Folic acid** and **vitamin B12** to help make red blood cells. **Vitamin C** helps your body absorb iron. Your doctor may ask you to take these every day before surgery.

Any Questions?

If you have any questions about the Pre Operative Anemia Management Program, please call the Blood Conservation Program at St. Joseph's Hospital at 448-5825. A program associate is available Monday-Friday from 7:00am-3:30pm.