Change Notification UK National Blood Services  No. 03 - 2020

SARS Coronavirus Infection

These changes apply to the Whole Blood and Component Donor Selection Guidelines

Please make the following changes to the entry:

Also Known As  Severe acute respiratory syndrome

Includes  SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)
          MERS (Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome)
          Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Excludes  Common colds and other upper respiratory tract infections caused by coronaviruses, without a history of travel or contact with the infections listed above.

Definition  Coronavirus risk areas:
These are specified in the ‘Geographical Disease Risk Index’ (GDRI)

Obligatory  Must not donate if:

   a) Less than 21 days from a donor’s return from a Coronavirus risk area (SARS, MERS, nCoV). leaving a country to which the Department of Health (DH) has advised deferring travel because there is, or is thought to be, ongoing transmission of SARS.

   b) Less than 21 days from the last contact with a person with Coronavirus infection (SARS, MERS, nCoV). SARS.

   c) Less than three months since recovery from Coronavirus infection (SARS, MERS, nCoV) SARS or possible Coronavirus infection. SARS.

Discretionary  If more than 21 days has passed since returning from a SARS endemic Coronavirus risk area, or from the last contact with a person affected by SARS- Coronavirus and the donor has remained well, accept.

\Continued
See if Relevant

The ‘Geographical Disease Risk Index’

Additional Information

In the event of re-emergence of SARS, donor deferral criteria will be urgently reviewed in the light of the most up-to-date scientific knowledge. This entry has been revised following reports of a cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan, China, in 2019-20. The causative agent of this outbreak is a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

Common coronaviruses cause colds and respiratory tract infections but are not considered a risk for transfusion recipients. Since 2002 there have been outbreaks in humans of new strains of coronavirus, associated with severe pulmonary infections and mortality rates of 10-35% e.g. SARS and MERS. There is no evidence at present that SARS coronaviruses can be transmitted by blood transfusion. The implicated coronavirus genome can be found in plasma in patients suffering from SARS, although data are not yet available about the presence of virus in blood in the pre-symptomatic period, and therefore these measures are precautionary, as there is no information at present to suggest that SARS can be transmitted by transfusion.

Information

This is a requirement of the Blood Safety and Quality Regulations 2005.

Reason for Change

The ‘Additional Information’ has been changed - This entry has been renamed and reworded to include coronavirus infections described above.

A-Z index changes:

1. Keep index entries for SARS and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
2. Add the following keywords:
   - MERS
   - Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome
   - Coronavirus Contact
   - Coronavirus Infection
   - CoV
   - Novel Coronavirus

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