

# BLOODLESS Medicine & Surgery PROGRAM

**Why should I consider  
Bloodless Medicine  
and Surgery?**



A guide to the advantages of this alternative approach to healthcare



## **UNDERSTANDING BLOODLESS MEDICINE AND SURGERY**

If you faced a medical condition or surgical procedure that required a blood transfusion, how would you feel? How would you react? Would you absolutely refuse to accept a blood transfusion? Would you consider accepting a blood transfusion if you knew it was the only treatment available? Would you be more comfortable knowing your medical team explored all available alternatives before dispensing blood?

Trinitas Hospital's Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program offers a respectful and attentive approach to patient care for those who prefer alternatives to the use of transfused blood.

## **REASONS FOR CHOOSING BLOODLESS HEALTHCARE**

Simply stated, bloodless healthcare is an advanced approach to providing medical and surgical care that reduces, or, in many cases, eliminates the need for blood transfusion.

A variety of reasons may influence a patient's decision to refuse, or resist, a blood transfusion. For some patients, blood transfusions may be a matter of religious belief or personal conviction. Others may feel more secure knowing that they are reducing the risk of complicated health issues that may arise by using donor blood. Still others may experience health conditions that make blood avoidance an important part of their treatment plan.

Bloodless medicine and surgery is in no way a new approach to treatment. As bloodless medicine has grown in the past 25 years, there is increasing evidence that it offers extraordinary benefits for you and your health.

## TECHNIQUES VERSATILE ENOUGH FOR NUMEROUS SPECIALTIES

Thanks to advances in equipment, bloodless and/or blood conservation techniques and technology, Trinitas Hospital can safely and successfully provide non-blood medical and surgical care for a variety of medical specialties, including, but not limited to:

- **Anesthesiology**
- **Cancer/Cancer Surgery**
- **Cardiology**
- **Emergency Medicine**
- **Gastroenterology**
- **General Surgery**
- **Hematology**
- **Intensive Care Management**
- **Neurology**
- **Neurosurgery**
- **Obstetrics & Gynecology**
- **Orthopedics**
- **Otolaryngology** (Ear, Nose and Throat)
- **Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery**
- **Urology**
- **Vascular Surgery**
- **Wound Care**



## TECHNOLOGIES USED IN BLOODLESS MEDICINE

Bloodless medicine and surgery uses proven, state-of-the-art technology and the latest scientific research to care for you while reducing or eliminating the use of blood transfusions. Some of the specialized techniques and equipment in this field of medicine include:

- **Synthetic erythropoietin:** This hormone stimulates bone marrow to produce more red blood cells and may be used to boost your hemoglobin level before surgery.
- **Volume expansion:** A process by which the circulation of a patient's own blood is enhanced by the use of non-blood intravenous fluids.
- **Acute Normovolemic Hemodilution (ANH):** This procedure involves directing a volume of a patient's blood outside the body and then adding a volume expander to dilute the remaining blood in the circulatory system. Diluting the patient's blood decreases the amount of red blood cells lost during surgery. This is done in the operating room just prior to your surgery. Your blood is held for you at bedside and given to you during or after surgery to replace any blood lost during the operation. Your blood is never stored in a blood bank for later use.
- **Hypotensive anesthesia:** This form of anesthesia causes a slight lowering of the blood pressure of an individual during surgery to decrease the amount of blood loss. Most effective in orthopedic procedures, this technique is applicable in nearly all other surgeries.

- **Induced hyperthermia:** For the anemic patient, this technique lowers the body temperature in order to decrease metabolic activity, heart rate, and oxygen consumption, with the objective of lessening the load on decreased numbers of red blood cells.
- **Intraoperative blood salvage, also known as “cell saver”:** Through this procedure, blood that might otherwise be lost during surgery is conserved, then re-circulated. There is no blood storage.
- **Autologous Platelet Gel:** Platelets, spun from your own blood, are mixed with a thrombin/calcium substance to make a gel that is applied to the surgical site. This gel reduces microbleeding and swelling, decreases pain, stimulates tissue growth, and ultimately enhances the healing process.
- **Microsampling:** Through this blood conservation method, very small amounts of blood are taken for testing instead of the larger amounts that are routinely drawn.





## **A TEAM APPROACH TO YOUR CARE**

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Using an integrated team approach, our highly skilled surgeons, anesthesiologists, hematologists, and pathologists, along with other health care specialists, nurses and support staff, are committed to your personal bloodless healthcare concerns. Our team will consult with you, consider your personal needs and health concerns, and help you to determine the best approaches for your particular circumstances.

For example, you may be able to receive pharmaceutical agents that can treat or prevent anemia. Through the administration of such agents, the quality and integrity of your own blood will be improved, thereby optimizing your ability to benefit from bloodless medicine techniques and procedures.

Whatever your condition, you can rest assured that our team's mission is to decrease and, in most cases, eliminate, the need for a blood transfusion.

## **RESPECT FOR YOUR PERSONAL CHOICE**

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We know you have chosen to come to Trinitas Hospital because you value the level of patient care and service that we offer on a daily basis. We also know that your decision to use bloodless medicine and surgery is one you have made after taking many factors into consideration.

We want to emphasize that we respect your participation and input in formulating your treatment plan. We will make every effort to assist you in developing a personalized plan that meets and satisfies your medical needs. Our team members are knowledgeable, compassionate, and responsible sources of information. They will listen to your concerns and make certain your wishes are respected and carried out.

## OPTIONS IN BLOODLESS MEDICINE AND SURGERY

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Patients who seek care through the Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program at Trinitas Hospital can choose from two options:

### ■ **Category One, Transfusion-Free Program**

Designed for individuals who choose to decline blood and blood products under any and all circumstances.

### ■ **Category Two, Blood Conservation Program**

Designed for those who know they will benefit from the bloodless techniques described, and who will consent to a blood transfusion, if their physician advises that it is absolutely necessary.

It is important for you to remember that your decision regarding bloodless medicine and surgery will be thoroughly documented. Every step of the way, all Trinitas Hospital staff members will be aware of and respect your wishes. You can be secure in the knowledge that Trinitas Hospital has designed the Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program for the purpose of observing and complying with your wishes.

## TREATMENT OF MINORS

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Medical and emergency care of minors is governed by legally established guidelines that the Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program and all participating physicians must follow. Please be aware that state and federal law may impose limitations on the ability to withhold or withdraw blood transfusion or blood therapy from minors, particularly in life-threatening circumstances.

## INSURANCE COVERAGE

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Bloodless and blood conservation medicine is an accepted form of health care. If your health insurance program is accepted at Trinitas Hospital, the care you receive through the Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program will be covered.

## A FINAL WORD

While the donated blood supply in the United States is extremely safe, it is still possible for infectious diseases to be transmitted through blood transfusions. Also, medical studies have shown that donated blood may reduce a person's immunity, which makes it difficult to fight off infections or recover from illnesses. Utilizing the various techniques and practices described in this brochure, it is our aim to provide the highest level of health care without using donated blood and blood products. We do this because we believe it is the very best medical practice.

The Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program at Trinitas Hospital encourages you to explore bloodless medicine as a personal option. By contacting our Program Manager, you can ask questions and receive further information that will help you decide if bloodless medicine and surgery is right for you. To find out more about the advantages of this valuable field of healthcare and its potential for positive impact on your health, visit: [www.TrinitasHospital.org](http://www.TrinitasHospital.org)

### **Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program Trinitas Hospital**

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**Trinitas Hospital** is a full service healthcare facility and a Catholic teaching hospital sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth in partnership with Elizabethtown Healthcare Foundation, serving those who live and work in Eastern and Central Union County. It is the result of the merger of Elizabeth General Medical Center and St. Elizabeth Hospital in January, 2000. Operating on two major campuses, Trinitas Hospital offers 531 beds, including a 120-bed long-term care center, and a comprehensive cancer center. Trinitas Hospital provides comprehensive medical/surgical services, adult and child/adolescent psychiatric care, a bloodless medicine/surgery program, cardiac care, diabetes management, emergency services, inpatient pediatric care, maternal/child health services including a high-risk newborn nursery, renal services, senior services, a sleep disorders center, and a wound healing center.