

THE CENTER FOR BLOODLESS MEDICINE AND SURGERY

A M E S S A G E F O R O U R P A T I E N T S

Dear Patient

I am pleased to have been given this opportunity to serve as coordinator for The Center for Bloodless Medicine and Surgery at Hackensack University Medical Center (HUMC). I am a very committed patient advocate, and have always had a strong belief in a patient's right to choose the kinds of treatment he or she is willing to receive. Because of my experience in covering Jo Valenti and the mentoring I have received from her regarding "bloodless medicine" I have developed a commitment to blood conservation in all areas of medicine and surgery, and have come to realize that long-held beliefs regarding "safe" hemoglobin levels are not necessarily scientifically supported. On the contrary, many times a transfusion, even when willingly accepted by a patient who has no strong religious or moral conviction to refuse blood, may not be the best course of action. I hope to actively promote the medical center-wide goal of increasing blood conservation, and to work diligently at increasing healthcare professionals' awareness of transfusion alternatives and the reduction of transfusion thresholds.

I have close to 17 years of experience as a registered nurse specializing in critical care, trauma, and emergency nursing primarily at HUMC. I am currently certified in adult critical care and trauma nursing, and am completing the requirements for a master's degree in nursing at Fairleigh Dickinson University, Teaneck, NJ.

All contact information will remain the same. I look forward to working with the community on a full-time basis.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Crum, BSN, RN

The Center for Bloodless Medicine and Surgery ■ Hackensack University Medical Center

Phone: (201) 996-2963

Website: www.humc.com ■ Click on Bloodless

MEET OUR PHYSICIANS



Joseph M. Feldman, M.D.,

Medical Director of
The Chest Pain Center

Chairman of
The Emergency Trauma
Department

Joseph M. Feldman, M.D., is the chairman of The Emergency/Trauma Department (ETD). He came to the medical center from Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center where he was assistant director of Adult Emergency Services. Dr. Feldman obtained his undergraduate degrees from State University of New York, Stony Brook and his medical degree from St. George School of Medicine. He has been practicing emergency medicine for many years and has numerous academic appointments. In addition, he is currently the principal investigator of several research studies. Under Dr. Feldman's direction, The Emergency/Trauma Department treats approximately 60,000 patients each year. Many of these patients are critically ill or badly injured. Our ETD physicians, trauma surgeons, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, and support staff treat them all with the highest standard of care and we are proud of our record of service to the community we serve.

“For those who refuse blood transfusions, it is good to remember that identifying yourself right away to the staff will ensure that you receive the type of non-blood management you require. Be prepared. Show your “no-blood” wallet card to the nurse and doctor. We are determined to respect your blood refusal and give you the best care.”

— Joseph M. Feldman, M.D.

SUCCESS STORY

It is with mixed emotions that I embark on writing my last newsletter. Many of you are already aware that for reasons of family responsibilities our family has relocated to South Jersey. My resignation as manager of The Center for Bloodless Medicine and Surgery was effective February 2, 2005.

After an exhaustive search, I am pleased to announce that Elizabeth Crum, BSN, RN, CCRN, has been hired to step into the position. Many of you already know Liz. At the very inception of The Bloodless Program, Liz became involved as a patient advocate and was the first cross-trained professional nurse to accept on-call assignments for the program. Liz has several years of experience in this capacity. Liz also accompanied me to three national blood conservation conferences. She has visited Brooklyn Headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses with me. The Paterson, NJ Hospital Liaison Committee members have already participated in meetings with Liz and will be working with her during her

transition period and beyond. As a member of The Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Steering Committee, Liz collaborated with me on writing hospital guidelines for bloodless patients. Liz also participated in community seminars here at the hospital. I am personally thrilled Liz has accepted this challenge. I am quite confident in her abilities. Her enthusiasm and background as a well-seasoned critical care specialist combine to bring the strengths to the job that will ultimately benefit our patients.

The past seven years have been a wonderful privilege for me. I thank all of you for the opportunity to assist you in various ways. The experience that I gained here at Hackensack University Medical Center enables me to assist other institutions in bloodless program development. Through the years I have been in a position to mentor other hospitals in the process. It has been a thoroughly enjoyable and challenging experience. While I will miss seeing you, I will be sure to communicate



Jo Valenti, RN, and Elizabeth Crum, BSN, RN, CCRN

with Liz from time-to-time, so she will be in a position to update you on how things are going for me.

I hope that you enjoy this newsletter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Jo Valenti, RN". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jo Valenti, RN

CASE STUDY

On October 2, 2003, Lydia Frias, a multiple trauma victim, arrived in The Emergency Trauma Department with injuries sustained in an automobile crash in which her husband was fatally injured. Lydia was awake and speaking upon arrival. She had immediately told the paramedics at the accident scene that she was a Jehovah's Witness and refused blood transfusion. This information was communicated to us by the paramedics. Lydia

also carried a "no-blood" wallet card with her. From the beginning of our assessment of her severe injuries, we kept her blood refusal well in mind. All efforts were made to make prompt diagnosis and life support measures in concert with non-blood management. John J. Lo Curto, M.D., chief, Trauma/Surgical Critical Care and Injury Prevention; Roger Keys, M.D., Trauma surgeon and Louis Quartararo, M.D., Orthopedic surgeon were on hand to manage the initial surgeries Lydia required. Caring for a patient with multiple orthopedic injuries is complicated. Quite a lot of planning is required because these types of injuries involve ongoing blood loss that is not possible to control. The broken bones bleed into the surrounding tissue and there is no way to prevent that process. The more bones that are broken, the more blood loss occurs. Lydia had sustained severe orthopedic trauma all over her body.

This trauma included fractures to both femurs, both tibias and her left humerus, forearm, and hand. Dr Quartararo initially used multiple external fixators to stabilize the broken bones. Gradually at appropriate intervals, Lydia was taken back for surgeries to more permanently correct the fractures. Lydia was eventually discharged to a rehabilitation facility after a six-week hospitalization. Blood transfusions were not used. Later on she returned for additional corrective surgeries. Today, Lydia is back at work and caring for her two beautiful children. Lydia states: "I am grateful for all of the special care that I received at Hackensack University Medical Center from the physicians and nurses and other staff. Although my recovery has not been easy, I realize that without the cooperation of the team and their commitment to respect my refusal of blood transfusions, the outcome would have been very different."



Patient Lydia Frias and her children, Anthony and Alexandria.

BLOODLESS MEDICINE AND SURGERY AT HACKENSACK UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

Bloodless Medicine and Surgery is a very important component of the culture at Hackensack University Medical Center. Besides being a part of the general orientation program for all new employees, all nursing staff as well as support staff from various departments receive special training in caring for the bloodless patient's special needs. The Center for Bloodless Medicine and Surgery (CBMS) staff, all of whom are registered nurses, work closely with every department involved in providing patient care to ensure patients' legal rights regarding blood refusal are respected. All professional staff at Hackensack University Medical Center, including physicians and residents, are offered continuing education programs to keep them abreast of the latest developments in bloodless medicine and surgery, so they can offer the most up-to-the-minute techniques to our patients. Most of these techniques are also used in caring for the general patient population at Hackensack University Medical Center. We recognize that blood conservation is good

medical practice based on scientifically supported evidence.

The major objective of The Center for Bloodless Medicine and Surgery at Hackensack University Medical Center is to support patients who refuse blood transfusion no matter what. Because Jehovah's Witnesses refuse blood transfusion as a fundamental part of their religious faith we also work closely with The Hospital Liaison Committee of the Jehovah's Witnesses community. The CBMS is fortunate to have on its staff several registered nurses trained in the management of patients who refuse blood transfusion. These nurses also work in various departments throughout the medical center and each brings his or her own special clinical expertise to the program in addition to their knowledge of bloodless medicine and surgery techniques. The CBMS always has a full-range of doctors, nurses, and other clinicians on call 24 hours



Gerri Vargas, MSN, RN, APN-C, CCRN, advance practice nurse for The Emergency/Trauma Department. Kim Marler, RN, staff nurse on 8PW, Patrick Degennaro, BS, RN, staff nurse in the Center for Ambulatory Surgery; and Lisa Tanis, RN, staff nurse in The Surgical Admissions Suite. Missing from photo: Elaine Lamb, BSN, RN, staff nurse on 8PW and Joanna Yohannes, BSN, RN, BC, staff nurse on 8PW.

a day, seven days a week, every day of the year to provide service to our patients should the need arise. All of us are happy to answer any questions you may have about bloodless medicine and surgery at Hackensack University Medical Center, or to help you with any questions or concerns about blood refusal.

NEW JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES' DOCUMENTATION

For those of you who are Jehovah's Witnesses, you are aware of the new Advance Directive that is replacing both the wallet card and the four-page proxy form. In order to address these new documents properly and have the blood refusal chart documentation in line with the current Jehovah's Witnesses' requirements, we have arranged for changes to be made in our Hackensack University Medical Center Administrative Policy for The Center for

Bloodless Medicine and Surgery. As before, all Jehovah's Witnesses patients must present their properly executed Medical Directive to hospital personnel as early as possible in their hospital encounter. This document will be photocopied to the patient's chart. This document will serve as a reference to your choices for non-blood management and who is appointed by you as your healthcare representative. For patients who do not present

a "no-blood" Advance Directive, The Center for Bloodless Medicine and Surgery staff will assist them in filling out a Medical Directive we provide. Refusal of blood transfusion is documented on this form and the form can be photocopied and reused.

We are prepared to replace all old documents currently on file with your new documents. We suggest you provide us with a photocopy of your new document as soon as possible.

ADVANCE DIRECTIVE "E" FILE

Since the beginning of The Bloodless Program, we have kept a copy of the Advance Directives of all patients in the office. For patients who return to the hospital and forget to bring their document, members of the Bloodless staff were able to access this copy and copy it to the patient's chart. A new service is being implemented that will enhance our ability to provide a chart copy of your directive: an electronic file is currently

being created to store the directives. The Admissions associate that assists you during the admission process will be able to access the electronic file and print out a copy of your document from a computer station within the medical center. Under regulatory mandates, Admissions personnel are required to ask each patient if they have an Advance Directive. When you are asked that question, please remember to tell the associate that

your document is on file here so they can retrieve the document for the chart. You may still simply bring a copy of your document along with you to the hospital if you choose. The main point is that upon each admission to the hospital, a copy of your document must be on the chart when it is assembled. We are confident this new service will benefit our patients.



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"America's Best Hospitals –
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Only NJ Acute-Care Hospital
Ranked In Any Category

J.D. Power and Associates
Distinguished Hospital ProgramSM –
HUMC Recognized for
Outstanding Patient Experience

HealthGrades Distinguished
Hospital Award for
Clinical ExcellenceSM –
Only Consumer-Oriented,
National Rating System
Focused on Clinical Outcomes

Quality New Jersey's
Environmental Award –
The Deirdre Imus
Environmental Center for
Pediatric Oncology and HUMC

Magnet Award
for Nursing Excellence –
New Jersey's First Hospital –
Ten Consecutive Years

Modern Physician Magazine –
One of America's Top Ten
Physician-Friendly Hospitals –
Only NJ Hospital Named

National Premier
Patient Services Innovator Award
for Overall Excellence

Grantee under Pursuing Perfection,
a national program of the
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation,
which is administered by the Institute
for Healthcare Improvement

AARP Modern Maturity
Magazine – One of America's
Top 20 Hospitals according to
Consumers' Checkbook and
Ranked Number Three
in Cardiac Services

Consumer Choice Award
Winner – Bergen-Passaic's
Most Preferred Hospital for
Overall Quality and Image –
Nine Consecutive Years

Child Magazine's Top-ranked
Children's Hospital in New Jersey

Award for Excellence
from the New Jersey Business
and Industry Association – for
Enterprise and Environmental

Hospitals and Health Networks
Magazine's Most Wired –
for Effective Use of
Information Technology –
Six Consecutive Years

TECHNOLOGY

"Volume Expanders"

For the patient who has sustained a significant blood loss, replacement of the lost volume is essential to prevent circulatory collapse which is fatal. Lost whole blood can be replenished with a non-blood volume expander such as saline, dextrose in water or lactated ringer's solution. This treatment helps stabilize the blood pressure which falls when acute blood loss occurs. It also assures that the red blood cells and platelets that are left can continue to circulate. Clinical trials have proven that humans can safely withstand significant loss of blood as long as the volume is replaced. However, use of volume expanders is not a substitute for blood. These solutions do not carry

oxygen nor do they contain the clotting factors essential to maintain hemostasis (prevention of bleeding). So there are some situations when even though the volume has been appropriately replaced, the patient is still in danger. For instance, when the blood loss is so severe that the red blood cell count is not enough to provide life sustaining oxygen or if the clotting factors are so depleted that massive hemorrhage occurs. Also, certain categories of patients cannot tolerate blood loss as well as others. The bottom line is that judicious use of volume expanders is a useful treatment in certain cases as a non-blood management tool.

SPANISH SEMINAR A SUCCESS

In November of 2004 a community seminar was held for the Spanish-speaking population. The audience was updated on The Center for Bloodless Medicine and Surgery through two videos and a slide presentation. Also, the group was assisted in filling out the Advance Directive. Each attendee received an educational folder and a "no-blood" key chain. We would like to thank three individuals who graciously volunteered their time and efforts toward the success of the program: Eric Cortez, Marco Fernandez, and Carmen Rivera.

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