



Intravenous literature: Lelubre, C. and Vincent, J-L. (2011) Red blood cell transfusion in the critically ill patient. *Annals of Intensive Care*. 1(43), .

Abstract:

Red blood cell (RBC) transfusion is a common intervention in intensive care unit (ICU) patients. Anemia is frequent in this population and is associated with poor outcomes, especially in patients with ischemic heart disease. Although blood transfusions are generally given to improve tissue oxygenation, they do not systematically increase oxygen consumption and effects on oxygen delivery are not always very impressive. Blood transfusion may be lifesaving in some circumstances, but many studies have reported increased morbidity and mortality in transfused patients. This review focuses on some important aspects of RBC transfusion in the ICU, including physiologic considerations, a brief description of serious infectious and noninfectious hazards of transfusion, and the effects of RBC storage lesions. Emphasis is placed on the importance of personalizing blood transfusion according to physiological endpoints rather than arbitrary thresholds.

