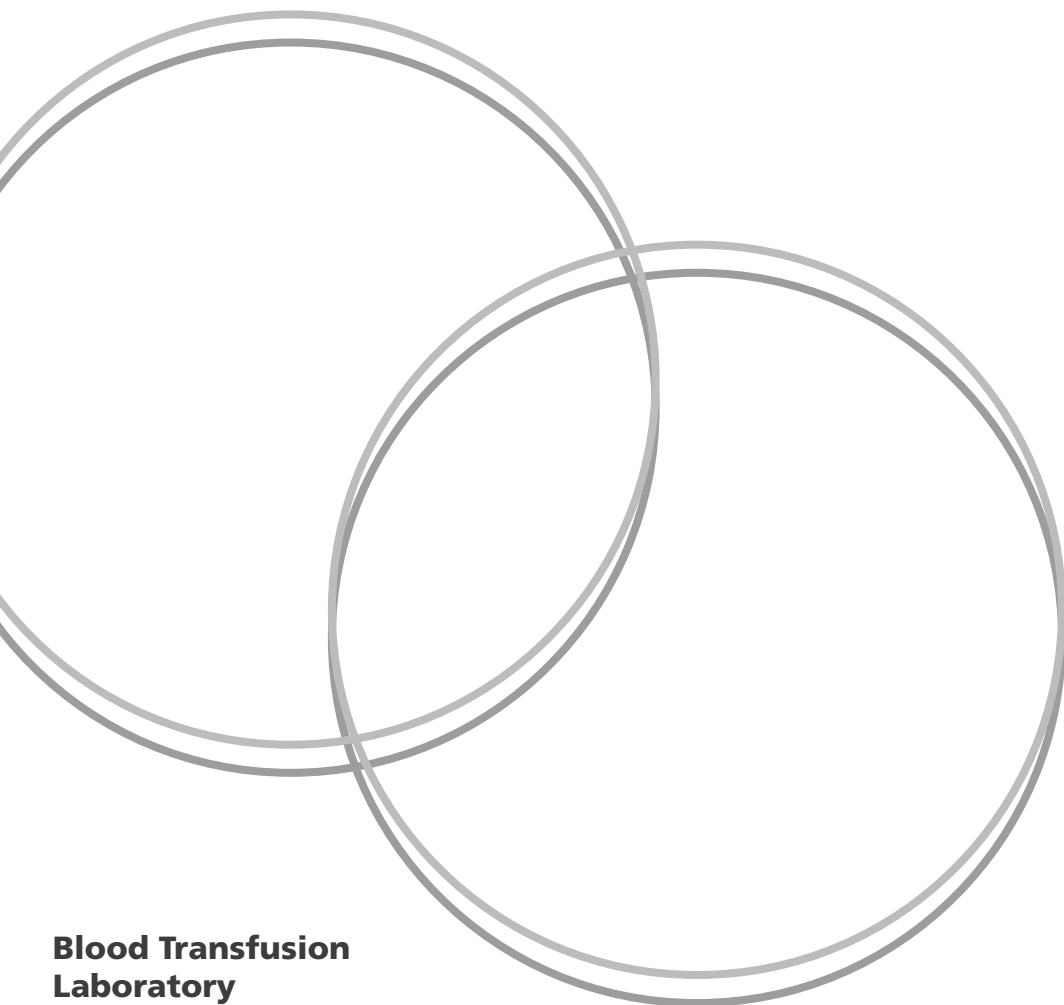


# Red cell antibodies

**Information for patients**



Results from your recent blood tests have shown that red cell antibodies are present in your blood. Details of these antibodies are shown on the antibody card provided which should be carried with you at all times.

**Q. What does this mean?**

**A.** These antibodies are related to red cells in your blood.

They are not caused because of any illness or infection.

They are not harmful to you and will not affect your health in anyway.

They are not infectious and cannot be caught by other people.

**Q. Why do I need to know about these antibodies?**

**A.** Red cell antibodies can develop naturally but usually occur after having a blood transfusion or following pregnancy. Approximately 1 in 15 patients develop an antibody to donated blood and subsequently will need to have specially matched blood.

Antibodies are part of the body's immune or 'self-defence' system. They are normally made to attack a substance which is foreign to the body (such as bacteria and viruses). You will always have these antibodies in your blood.

Your body has made some antibodies which attack red cell proteins. These are not harmful, but should you need a blood transfusion in the future, the donated blood should not contain the red cell protein for which you have an antibody. This is to ensure your body doesn't react to the transfused blood and make you feel unwell.

In pregnant women, some antibodies can occasionally affect your baby. Therefore it is important for doctors who treat you and for the hospital laboratories to know about the red cell antibodies in your blood. Please show this card to your doctor or midwife if you ever require hospital treatment or attend an antenatal clinic.

Do not worry if you forget or lose your card, as hospital laboratories will still have a record of your antibodies and find suitable blood for you. You can obtain a replacement card by contacting the Transfusion Laboratory.

Telephone: **01865 220 339**

Email: [Oxford.Transfusionlab@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:Oxford.Transfusionlab@ouh.nhs.uk)

**Blood Transfusion Laboratory**

Level 4

John Radcliffe Hospital

Oxford

OX3 9DU

**Never let your card be used by another person  
as the details relate only to you.**

**It may be dangerous for another person to receive  
the blood which is meant for you.**

## Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
[www.ouh.nhs.uk/information](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/information)



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