



Recommendations to ensure a safe, sufficient blood supply during campaigns to administer the measles/rubella (MR) double viral vaccine to adults

Since the countries of the Region have commenced the rubella elimination process, implementing campaigns to vaccinate adult men and women with the measles/rubella double viral vaccine (MR).

Since the Standards for Blood Banks state that people vaccinated against rubella/measles, including those who received a combination vaccine against other viruses as well, should be deferred as blood donors for four weeks post vaccination.

In order to prevent the risk of a blood shortage, we suggest following measures to ensure the availability of donors and the safety of donated blood during the campaign and four weeks after vaccinating adult men and women with the measles/rubella vaccine:

1. Activities to educate and inform the public and donors during normal periods and at special times. A valuable step would be to promote a campaign of voluntary blood donation during the month leading up to the vaccination campaign, followed by post-donation measles/rubella vaccination.
2. Administration of the vaccine in blood banks one month before, during, and one month after the national campaign. Carry out post-donation vaccination, and adhering to donation standards, recommend that vaccinated donors donate blood again in three or four months, depending on their gender. It is necessary to establish appropriate vaccination and monitoring processes and procedures in blood banks and mobile donation units.
3. Organization of known volunteer donors and scheduling of their donations.
4. Greater efforts to promote blood donation among donors of an age not subject to vaccination, depending on the upper-age limit (example, 40-60 years of age).
5. Donation by apheresis. This is an important option, but efforts are needed to attract sufficient numbers of donors, especially in groups not subject to vaccination.
6. Evaluate the blood supply and keep health authorities and the population informed about the need for donors. If necessary, use graphic materials during the donation campaign. Review country experiences during emergencies (tragedies); for example, El Salvador's experience with the tragedy following the earthquakes

of January/February 2002, and use the figure of an automobile gas tank as an indicator.

7. Consider blood banks as centers for reporting events supposedly attributable to vaccination and immunization (adverse events) in order to monitor adverse events in transfused patients (the focus could be on the most vulnerable and most closely monitored patients, such as hemato-oncological and hemodialized, patients, for example).

**Blood Services
Health Technology Project for the Quality of Care**

Comprehensive Family Immunization Project

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