

Room Temperature Platelet Bag Handling Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

All platelet containers are designed to have high gas (O₂ and CO₂) permeability. These materials are susceptible to damage caused by friction, pinching, excessive pressure, heat exposure or other mechanical stresses. Therefore, the containers must be handled with care and the environment should be kept clean to minimize the risk of damage and contamination.

These recommendations provide best practices in the care and handling in the hospital environments.



Decontamination of Surfaces / Workspaces / Storage Areas:

- Conduct daily cleaning and disinfection on work surfaces that may be contaminated with blood. For example: counters, storage bins, platelet agitators, leukoreduction pole trays and transport carts.¹
- Disinfect surfaces or equipment in the event of a leak or spill.



Inspection of Surfaces / Workspaces / Storage Areas:

- Areas should be free of objects that could result in punctures or abrasions.
- Routinely check agitator drawers for any damage to the surfaces or the interfaces for opening and closing drawers.



General Product Handling:

- Handle sets and platelets with care.
- Ensure manipulation does not cause pinching, friction or excessive pressure.
- Avoid stacking multiple units on top of each other, which can lead to risk of one or more units falling or create pressure points with rigid objects (e.g., clamps, tie tags).
- Inspect the containers for any scrapes or leaks throughout the process. If a leak is detected:
 - Follow your institutional SOPs for notification protocols and report to your blood provider.



Storage and Agitation:

- Place containers in portrait position and ports flat against the agitator drawer with the label up and the container away from any drawer and slide interface.
 - Portrait position minimizes container movement.
 - Label face up minimizes container handling.
 - Keeping containers away from the interface between any drawer and slide interface minimizes potential damage.
- Position containers on agitator drawer so that they are not overlapping with other containers.

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- Position containers so that they are fully within the drawer, no overhang on the front lip of the drawer.



Centrifugation:

- Only centrifuge platelets in containers designed for centrifugation.



Pneumatic Tube Transport System:

- Validate use of the pneumatic tube system.
- Ensure the carrier is well padded and airtight.
- Place platelet inside sealed transport bag or pouch before placing in the carrier.
- Ensure there are no pressure points on the container when placed in the tube.
- Ensure ports of the platelet bag are pointing away from the direction of travel.
- Minimize the number of times the platelet is transported via the pneumatic tube.
- If the container must be folded to fit within the tube, do not fold bag at the ports.



Packing for Shipment:

- Inspect the storage containers for any scrapes or leaks. If a leak is detected:
 - Follow your institutional SOPs for notification protocols and report to your blood provider.
- Routinely disinfect shipping container per institutional procedure and schedule.
- Remove clamps from containers prior to packing.
- Pack platelet containers to avoid friction or pressure points.
 - Place tie tags flat against the container and near the end flap.
 - For flat placement within the shipping container, placing platelet containers with ports alternating direction within the stack is preferred.
 - If the platelet container requires folding to fit within the shipping container, fold at the bottom and not at the ports.
- Avoid excessive compression on contents when packing the shipping container.

Note: These recommendations represent general best practices and should be applied at the operator's discretion. Please follow your institutional SOPs or speak with your management for clarification.

1. AABB Technical Manual, 20th Edition (Chapter 2, Facilities, Work Environment, and Safety).