
MEMORANDUM

**The American Red Cross and Bacterial Contamination of
Platelets**

The College of American Pathologists (CAP) revised the requirement TRM.44955 (bacterial contamination of platelets) in its Laboratory Accreditation Checklist. This now states "The laboratory (or its blood supplier) uses an FDA-cleared/approved or equivalent system to detect the presence of bacteria in all platelet components." This also requires that each of your blood supplier(s) inform you as to whether platelets are tested for bacterial contamination.

Currently the Red Cross tests apheresis platelets (SDP) using the BacT/ALERT® automated bacterial detection system.

Transfusion of pathogen-reduced platelets is also a recognized safety measure that mitigates the risks of bacterial contamination. The Red Cross is providing this product to a growing number of its client hospitals.

Additionally, TRM.44955 requires that blood centers notify hospitals of supplied units suspected of containing bacteria. The Red Cross already has this policy and will continue this practice.

This notification also applies to the requirements of AABB Standards 5.1.5.2*, 5.5.5.2.1 and 5.1.5.2.2 (Standards for Blood Banks and Transfusion Services, 32nd Edition: effective April 1st, 2020).

*21 CFR 606.145

