

# Important Information About Medications Before a Transfusion

MSK follows the safest ways to prepare and store blood products. This helps prevent you from having a reaction to your blood transfusion.

You may need medications before your blood or platelet transfusion. All medications can cause side effects.

MSK follows guidelines that tell us if you need medications before your transfusion. Similar guidelines are used by many other cancer centers.

This information explains MSK's medication guidelines for preventing reactions to transfusions. These medications are given before the transfusion.

## **No reaction to transfusion:**

If you have not had a reaction to a transfusion, we will not give you medications.

## **Fevers during transfusion:**

You may have had fevers more than once during a transfusion. Whether we give you medication depends on what caused your fever, the transfusion or something else.

## **Hives or itchiness:**

You may have had hives or itchiness more than once because of a transfusion. We may give you diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) before future transfusions.

## **Severe reaction:**

You may have had a severe reaction to a transfusion, such as trouble breathing. We may give you 1 or more of the following medications before future transfusions:

- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®)
- Steroids
- Antacid

If you have questions, please call your healthcare provider.

