

## Editorial

# Prevention is better than cure in blood donation

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### Introduction

The proverb “prevention is better than cure” is familiar to all since we were young. Mostly concerning our health, i.e. avoiding candies to prevent dental caries, covering yourself warm to prevent catching a cold, etc. In blood donation, vasovagal reaction (VVR) is the most common adverse reaction among other adverse reactions<sup>1,2</sup>. Even though the prevalence of VVRs associated to blood donation was very low,<sup>2</sup> the serious complication and injury consequences of VVR had been observed.<sup>3,4</sup> In addition, unsuccessful blood donation may lead to negative impact on the rate of donor retention.

“How to prevent VVRs in blood donation,” first of all, significant risk factors should be identified and prioritized the strategies to attack each one of them accordingly. Donor information and education are very essential for all donors, especially young and less experienced whole blood donors. They are known for more likely to develop VVRs. Water drinking prior to donation is proved to effectively decrease the rate of VVRs.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the additional tips for the rest of the day after donation should be well informed, especially to stay hydrated and avoid the activities which are prone to accidents and injuries.

Physiological and psychological preventive interventions to reduce both immediate and delayed VVRs should be seriously considered and put into practice. For example, the applied muscle tension technique during blood collection to help prevent a fainting response<sup>6</sup>. In addition, comfortable premise, a warm welcome and well taken care of donors with the heartfelt wish for donors to have a good experience with blood donation will strongly support the donor retention rate. Monitoring and evaluation of all donor care functions should be regularly performed, especially iron depletion

in repeated blood donors. Early detection by monitoring for serum ferritin leads to the ferritin-guided donation interval policy in lowering iron deficiency, decreasing donor deferrals due to low hemoglobin and improve donor health<sup>7</sup>.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, prevention is the fundamental of risk management. To identify potential problems in advance and have a plan for addressing them. This concept will enable us to avoid internal and external risks. In addition, it also offers great opportunities for development in blood donation.

### References

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