

# Blood safety and availability

Tackling challenges in blood collection and exploring new therapeutic applications . . .

**G**lobal medical technology company Fenwal, Inc. is a focused on improving blood collection, filtration, separation, storage and transfusion to ensure the availability, safety and effectiveness of blood components. Medical professionals and patients in over 60 countries rely on Fenwal technologies for life-saving blood therapies.

## A vital mission

Fenwal was launched in the 1940s to fulfil an idea that endures today – that there are better ways to collect, protect and administer blood.

This spirit of innovation and service drove Fenwal to develop the first flexible, disposable container for blood collection, eliminating complications associated with glass containers and allowing blood to be separated into therapeutic units.

More recently, Fenwal has developed advanced cell separation technologies to help increase the safety and availability of blood therapies to treat a wide variety of diseases and conditions.

Fenwal also partners with other companies to provide products and services that support its mission to provide innovative, cost-effective blood technology solutions that enable medical professionals to improve healthcare outcomes.

## Blood tracking and traceability

In Europe, Fenwal market, sells and distributes the Biolog-id RFID (radio frequency identification) blood tracking and traceability system.

The Biolog-id system provides comprehensive information about each blood unit following collection through transfusion with real-time data available to both the hospital and blood or plasma collection site. This aids hospitals in managing blood inventories, tracking the temperature and storage conditions of each blood

unit, and assuring the right blood unit is matched to a patient need.

The Biolog-id system uses radio waves to transfer and store data from the electronic labels, helping to prevent transfusion errors by eliminating manual steps and paper-based procedures. The system also enables blood centres and hospitals to work together more effectively to assure the right blood component is available when needed by giving both organisations instant visibility to blood inventories all along the supply chain.

## Platelet safety

Published studies demonstrate that bacterial contamination in platelets is the most important infectious threat to transfusion safety.

The Verax Platelet PGD® test distributed by Fenwal is a hospital-based testing method for detecting bacteria in platelets. This day of transfusion test is widely available, proven effective, affordable, and is CE Marked in Europe and cleared for market in the United States.

A recent study published in the peer-reviewed journal Transfusion demonstrates that the Verax Platelet PGD® test is an important safety measure than can prevent patients from receiving bacterially contaminated platelet units missed by culture tests. Bacterially contaminated platelets can cause sepsis.

Hospitals in the US and Europe, particularly those that specialise in treating cancer, are starting to adopt the Verax Platelet PGD® test as an additional safety measure for their platelet inventory. The test takes a few minutes to perform, and results are ready in less than 30 minutes.

## Therapeutics

In 2011, Fenwal received CE Mark approval for a therapeutic plasma exchange protocol for the company's Amicus® system. The Amicus® system

is used today throughout the world to collect platelets, platelets with concurrent plasma and red cells, and mononuclear cells used for therapeutic applications and clinical research.

Therapeutic plasma exchange, or TPE, removes substances from blood that can cause or complicate disease and is used in the treatment of a wide range of hematologic, neurologic, autoimmune, and kidney disorders. The addition of a TPE protocol makes the Amicus® system an even more versatile technology for hospitals and blood centres.

## Providing confidence in the blood supply

For more than 60 years, Fenwal specialists have been a source of strength to the transfusion medicine industry, steadfastly identifying and tackling challenges in blood collection, safety, and exploring new therapeutic applications.

Technological advances from Fenwal have enabled better, more efficient ways to collect and process blood components and to optimise component therapy.

The company remains focused on building and strengthening its core business in cell separation technologies. Fenwal is building next generation technologies designed to further improve the safety, ease of use and efficiency of blood collection, while exploring new therapeutic applications.



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