

Blood counts: low platelet count

When to get help right away

If you have a very low platelet count, you may need platelet transfusion. If you experience any of the following conditions immediately you should go to the emergency department/Urgent care

- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Look pale, weak
- Confusion, loss of consciousness
- Sudden severe headache, abdominal pain
- Blood in the urine, stool or sputum
- Excessive bleeding that cannot be stopped eg cut, nose bleed, vaginal bleed

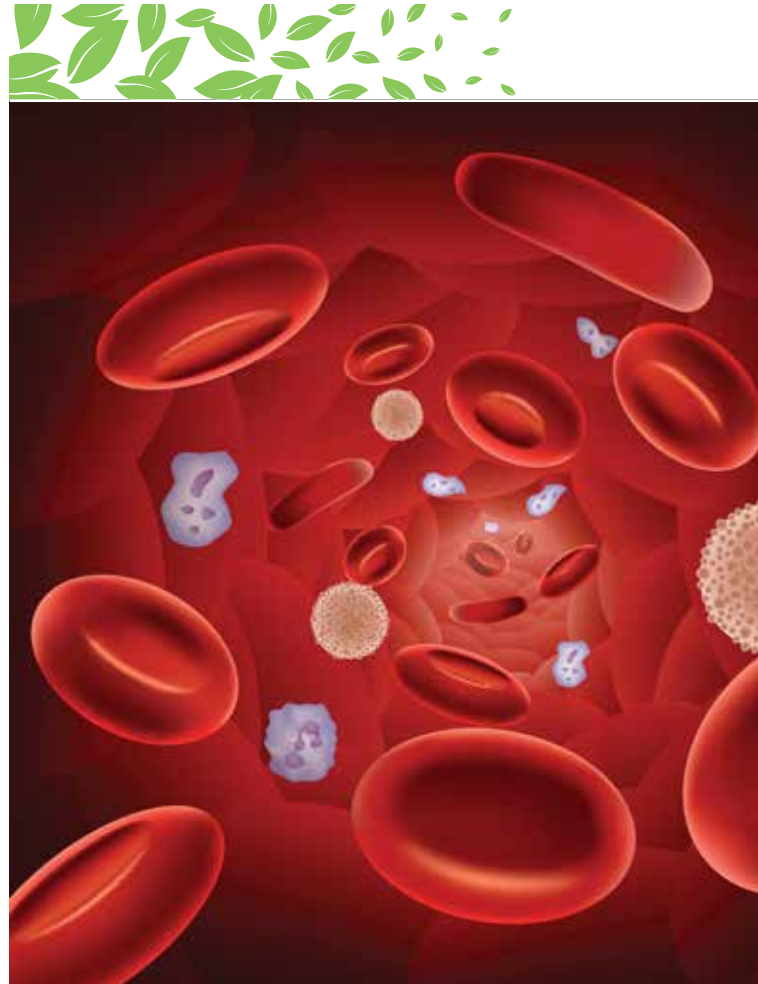
*Remember to tell doctors, nurses or other health care professionals that you are on cancer treatment, so you will get the proper care.

Where can I get more information?

Urgent care unit (UCU) open 24hrs contact no 44397277/44397179

You can visit the Patient Information Center available from Sunday to Thursday

Contact no (44397530) from 7 am to 3 pm



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What are platelets?

Platelets are type of blood cell that helps blood to clot .It helps to prevent heavy bleeding when you hurt yourself .It is very important that you have enough platelet in your blood.

What causes low platelet count?

- Diseases like: Leukemia, lymphoma, multiple myeloma, Idiopathic Trans purpura (ITP) may cause low platelet count.
- Treatment related eg: Cancer treatment like Chemotherapy, radiotherapy, Biotherapy, Bone marrow transplant.
- Blood thinning medications like Aspirin, Heparin, Clexane
- Acute infections like Bacterial or viral infections

What are the signs and symptoms of low platelet count?

- New bruises or discoloration on the skin
- Red pinpoint dots on the skin, usually starting on the feet and legs.
- Bad headaches, dizziness, or blurred vision
- Weakness that gets worse
- Pain in joints or muscles
- Bleeding from anywhere (such as the mouth, nose, or rectum)
- Bloody or dark brown vomit that looks like coffee colored
- Bright red, dark red or black stools (poop) “Blood in stool” and “Blood in urine” for more on this.)
- Women may have heavy vaginal bleeding during monthly periods

What can I do if I know my platelet count is low?

- Check with your doctor before using any herbal supplements may these reduce your platelet count
- Use only an electric razor (not blade) for shaving.
- Do not put anything in your rectum, including suppositories, enemas, thermometers, etc.
- Don't participate in contact sport exercise like: hockey ,kick boxing, football
- If your mouth is bleeding, rinse it a few times with ice water.
- Check with your doctor before any dental check-up
- Use a soft toothbrush to clean your teeth
- Be careful when using sharp objects
- Be careful not to burn yourself when ironing or cooking.
- Avoid cut or injury while cooking
- If your nose is bleeding Put ice on the nose and pinch the nostrils shut for 5 minutes before releasing them. Ice on the back of the neck may also help.
- For bleeding from other areas, press on the bleeding area with a clean, dry washcloth or paper towel until bleeding stops.
- If bleeding starts, stay calm. Sit or lie down and get help.
- Be sure to tell the nurse or doctor that you are on chemotherapy.