



NATIONAL HEMOPHILIA FOUNDATION



For You and Your Doctor



Project Red Flag

Brochure – Front Cover
4 page, 6" x 9", 4-color



If you think you may have a bleeding disorder, check any of the following statements that apply to you.

- I have unusually heavy menstrual periods.
- I frequently have nosebleeds.
- I bruise very easily.
- My gums bleed.
- I bleed for a long time following dental work, surgery or childbirth

If any of these statements apply to you, especially heavy periods, please share this brochure with your doctor or healthcare professional.

Heavy menstrual periods, excessive nosebleeds, easy bruising, bleeding gums, and heavy bleeding following dental work, surgery, or childbirth could be the signs of a bleeding disorder – a flaw in the body's clotting system.

Women with untreated bleeding disorders face serious and unnecessary risks following injury, surgery, and childbirth.

The most common bleeding disorder is von Willebrand disease (VWD) – a genetic disorder affecting approximately 1% to 2% of men and women. Studies show that a significant percentage of women who consult their doctors for excessive menstrual bleeding and show no gynecological cause have VWD.

Although much rarer than VWD, women and girls can also be born with other bleeding disorders, such as factor VIII and factor IX deficiency (hemophilia) as well as other clotting factor deficiencies.

● ABOUT VON WILLEBRAND DISEASE (VWD)

VWD is caused by a deficient or defective blood protein called von Willebrand factor (VWF), a clotting factor in the blood. If a person has an altered VWF protein or low levels of VWF, it takes longer for bleeding to stop.

● TESTING AND TREATMENT

If you suspect your patient has a bleeding disorder, please refer them to a hemophilia treatment center (HTC), federally supported health centers that specialize in the testing and treatment of bleeding disorders, or to a hematologist for testing. You can locate your nearest HTC at www.projectredflag.org or by calling (800) 42-HANDI.

Because it is difficult to diagnose, testing for VWD comprises several different tests including bleeding time, factor VIII activity, ristocetin cofactor activity, VWF: Antigen, multimer analysis, and ristocetin-induced platelet aggregation (RIPA).

The treatments prescribed by a hematologist for an individual with VWD depend on the severity and symptoms of a patient's disorder. Women with heavy menstrual bleeding may benefit from oral estrogens or desmopressin (Stimate nasal spray). Other patients may require the use of blood clotting factor concentrates.

Cryoprecipitate, a blood component derived from individually donated units of blood, is no longer recommended for use by the Medical and Scientific Advisory Council (MASAC) of the National Hemophilia Foundation.

● MORE INFORMATION FOR DOCTORS AND HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

If you would like to receive more information about women's bleeding disorders, please contact the National Hemophilia Foundation at info@projectredflag.org or call (800) 42-HANDI to receive fact sheets, article reprints, publications, and sample patient questions.