

PROCEDURE: PLATELET DEPLETION

Description:

Platelets are small cells circulating in the blood. They play an important role in helping blood clot. A normal platelet count is between 150,000/ μ L – 400,000/ μ L. In some blood disorders, the platelet count may reach above a million and complications such as clotting or bleeding may occur. During the procedure, a centrifuge is used to remove the excess platelets. An anticoagulant solution containing sodium citrate is used to prevent blood from clotting in the machine.

Reason for the Procedure:

Platelet depletion is used when platelet counts are dangerously elevated and patients show symptoms. High platelet counts may carry a risk of stroke and heart attack.

Venous Access:

In most cases, platelet depletion can be performed using intravenous needles that are placed in each arm. Blood is removed from one arm, processed in the machine, and returned to the patient through the other arm. In patients with small or fragile peripheral veins, the placement of a central venous catheter may be necessary.

Duration:

A typical procedure lasts an average of 2 hours, but may be longer for some patients.

Risks and Side Effects:

Platelet depletion is a safe procedure but side effects can occur. Common side effects include feeling cold, tingling in the fingers and around the mouth, nausea, and dizziness. It is very important to notify medical staff if these symptoms occur. Serious complications such as cardiac rhythm disturbances and seizures are extremely rare.

Diseases for Which it is Used:

Platelet depletion is a standard procedure for dangerously elevated platelet levels that are causing symptoms.

Number of Procedures that are Required:

This depends on the platelet count. Most cases require a short course of treatment. In some cases chronic therapy may be needed. Patients should ask their physicians for specific details pertaining to their condition.

Other Considerations:

Consult with your physician for any questions you may have.

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