



# e-Network Forum

## CALIFORNIA BLOOD BANK SOCIETY

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### ***Is Interleukin-11 of value in raising the platelet count in surgical patients (Jehovah's Witnesses) with thrombocytopenia?***

**A colleague in Australia** wants to know if any e-network colleagues have had experience using Interleukin eleven (IL-11) in surgical patients with thrombocytopenia? IL-11 is a thrombopoietic growth factor that directly stimulates the proliferation of hematopoietic stem cells and megakaryocyte progenitor cells and induces megakaryocyte maturation resulting in increased platelet production. IL-11 is a member of a family of human growth factors which includes human growth hormone, granulocyte colony stimulating factor (G-CSF), and other growth factors. The inquiring Australian has a Jehovah's Witness patient who is thrombocytopenic and being prepared for **liver transplantation**; however, the patient does not want any blood transfusions. The hematologists are exploring IL-11 as a possible adjuvant modality and would like input from those with some experience. In the meantime, the patient has been placed on **erythropoetin** and the platelet count has come up from 20,000 to 85,000 per microliter.

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The following responses have been received.

1. **A transfusion medicine physician in Los Angeles** reports that regarding the use of IL-11 in raising platelet counts for selected patients, his hospital used the drug in 3 patients in preparation for autologous stem cell transplants and found **no beneficial effects**. He adds that they have since abandoned its use in that setting.

**ADDENDA** Nov. 15, 2002

2. **The original inquiring physician in Australia** wishes to update e-Network colleagues with a recent case report by **Ustun C. et al.** (Ann Hematol Oct 2002) showing that IL-11 had normalized the platelet count of a thrombocytopenic Jehovah's Witness patient in preparation for surgery.

Please submit comments to the [e-Network Forum](#).

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CBBS e-Network Forum Editor & Moderator



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**Addenda:** Sept. 12 & Nov. 15, 2002

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