

Patient Fact Sheet

Special Blood Requirement – Blood Type - Weak or Partial D (Rh)

What is a weak or partial D (Rh) blood type?

If your blood type is Rh type positive (for example group O Rh positive) the Rh(D) protein (antigen) is present on your red blood cells; if your Rh type is negative (for example group O Rh negative), that protein is missing from your red blood cells. Most people type clearly as Rh(D) positive or negative.

In a small percentage of the population (0.2-1.0%), there is a change in the way the Rh(D) protein is expressed. In some cases, less protein is present. This is called a 'Weak D type'. In other cases, some part of the protein is missing. This is called a 'Partial D type'.

The laboratory that tested your blood type found a weaker than usual Rh(D) result. A special blood test called 'genotyping' identified weak Rh(D) or partial Rh(D).

How does it affect me?

Neither of these changes in Rh(D) expression will harm you. However, if you need a transfusion, they will determine the Rh(D) type of the blood product you receive.

The enclosed card will indicate if you should receive Rh(D) positive or Rh(D) negative red blood cells.

If the recommendation is to treat you as Rh(D) negative, you should receive Rh(D) negative red blood cells and, if you become pregnant, you require Rh(D) immune globulin or RhIG (brand name WinRho®) as per obstetrical guidelines for Rh(D) negative women.

What do I need to do?

If you require a blood transfusion, or become pregnant, it is important that your health care providers are aware of your Rh(D) blood type to ensure you receive the appropriate care.

- ✓ Please carry the attached card with you and show it to your physician or nurse if a blood transfusion is being considered and/or if you are pregnant.
- ✓ Consider registering with a medical alert program (such as MedicAlert® or an equivalent program) that will identify your specific Rh(D) blood type to first responders and physicians.