Plateletpheresis

Platelets are small cells in your blood that help your blood to clot. **Plateletpheresis (plate·let·phe·re·sis)** is a procedure used to remove platelets from your blood.

How is the procedure done?

During this procedure, blood is removed and sent through tubing that is connected to an apheresis machine. This machine spins your blood and separates out your blood to be removed. Only a small portion of your blood is taken through the machine at any one time. After your platelets are removed, your remaining blood is returned to your body.

For this procedure, you will need two intravenous (IV) catheters placed. (IV) catheters are thin, flexible tubes placed in a vein. One IV is used to remove the blood and the other IV is used to return blood to your body. This can be done by putting an IV in each arm or by using a special central venous catheter (CVC) that has two lumens or ports. This procedure can take 2 to 6 hours to complete.

A specialty trained nurse will check on you before, during and after the procedure. When the procedure is done, you will be removed from the machine. If you had IVs placed in your arms, they will be removed and covered with a dressing.

A blood thinner (anticoagulant) is slowly added to the blood during the procedure. This is given to prevent your blood from clotting. Side effects from the blood thinner may include slight tingling around your mouth, chest vibrations, and a cold or chilled feeling. Calcium will be given to you to prevent these symptoms.
What are the side effects with this procedure?
Each person may respond differently to this procedure. Possible side effects may include:

- Dizziness or feeling light-headed
- Nausea

**Tell the nurse right away if you have any of these side effects.**

What can I expect after the procedure?

- You may feel tired after your procedure and should limit activities for the next 12 hours.
- Your arms may feel sore from being in one position during the procedure.
- You should drink plenty of non-caffeinated fluids to stay hydrated.
- Keep the bandages dry and in place for 5 hours after your procedure.
- Do not lift anything over 25 pounds or exercise for 24 hours after your procedure.
- If you get dizzy, lie down and put your legs up.
- If you see any redness or have pain where the IV was in your arm, you should call the Apheresis Department.

**Call the Apheresis Department with questions or concerns:**

- Monday through Friday, call 614-293-8672
- After hours or weekends, call the hospital operator at 614-293-8000. Ask the operator to page the Pathology resident on call.