

Extract from House of Commons
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NQ4/20/1

AIDS

Mr. McCrindle asked the Secretary of State for Social Services if he is satisfied that all blood supplies used for transfusion purposes are free from the acquired immune deficiency syndrome virus; whether some acquired immune deficiency syndrome viruses are not detectable in blood supplies; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Newton [pursuant to his reply, 28 November 1986, c. 405]: The virus known to cause AIDS is HIV but there have been recent reports suggesting that the disease may also arise from other strains of virus.

The safety of the blood supply in the United Kingdom is maintained in two ways. The first is that those who may have been exposed to known particular risks of infection are asked not to donate blood. This covers those who may have been exposed to HIV or other viruses linked to AIDS. The second is that all donations are tested.

No cases of HIV transmission through blood transfusion have been reported since testing was introduced. Although there is as yet no corresponding test for new strains, there is no evidence from preliminary monitoring to suggest that these are prevalent in the United Kingdom. Thus there is no reason to believe that blood supplies are at risk from this source although we are keeping the matter under close review.