NEW HEAT TREATED FACTOR VIII CONCENTRATE

I am sure you will know that all factor VIII is now heated in an attempt to inactivate any viruses that may be present. We believe that the heated factor VIII concentrate that has been produced by the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service during the past two and a half years does not contain HIV (the AIDS virus). This material has been treated to 60°C for 24 hours.

A new factor VIII concentrate has been developed which has been heated hotter and for longer (greater than 75°C for 72 hours) than the previous product. It is very similar to the NHS factor VIII being manufactured currently in England where it has been used very successfully for the past year. One advantage of the new product over the present concentrate is that it may not transmit viruses that cause hepatitis as well as almost certainly being entirely safe for the AIDS virus. Research evidence suggests that it is even better than the present factor VIII concentrate. One potential drawback is that it may take a little longer to dissolve after the water has been added and I realise that this may be inconvenient. The manufacturers believe that more recently produced batches may dissolve more easily than the ones currently available and thus this difficulty may become less of a drawback.

We still wish to evaluate the new factor VIII which is being issued on a trial basis and we hope you will agree to use it. It is important that we receive your comments and in particular we are keen to know of any problems you experience when using it. I believe that this new Scottish factor VIII concentrate, however, is as safe as any available in the world and I would encourage you to use it. If you agree to do so, I should be grateful if you would sign a consent form.

Dr. C.A. Ludlam
Director, Haemophilia Centre

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