

Transfusions during hospital transport may help trauma patients survive

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Study compared short-term survival in severely injured patients.

(HealthDay)—Giving blood transfusions to severely injured patients while they're on the way to the hospital could save their lives, at least in the short term, new research suggests.

The study included 97 [trauma patients](#) who received transfusions of either plasma or [red blood cells](#) in a ground or air ambulance before they arrived at the [hospital](#). These patients were compared with 480 trauma patients who didn't receive transfusions on the way to the hospital.

Patients who received the transfusions were 8 percent less likely to die within six hours after arriving at the hospital, compared to those in the comparison group. Those in the transfusion group were also 13 percent more likely to survive to [hospital discharge](#), although the researchers said

this was not statistically significant.

The study was scheduled to be presented Saturday at the annual meeting of the American Heart Association in Dallas.

"Earlier, effective intervention seems to have the best effect on outcomes, such as pre-hospital transfusions on trauma patients that can save lives," study lead researcher Dr. John Holcomb said in a heart association news release.

Trauma is the leading cause of death in people aged 44 and younger in the United States, and the leading cause of years of life lost, according to the researchers.

Because the study was presented at a medical meeting, the data and conclusions should be viewed as preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

More information: The American College of Emergency Physicians offers [injury prevention tips](#).

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