MYTHS AND FACTS:

AIDS & THE BLOOD SUPPLY

MYTH: People are at risk for AIDS when they donate blood

FACT: A new, sterile needle is used for each donor. The needle is then immediately thrown away. Blood donors cannot contract AIDS, hepatitis or other infectious diseases by donating blood.

MYTH: Many people who should not be doing so are donating blood.

FACT: Educational efforts to discourage high-risk individuals from donating blood have been successful. Strict donor screening procedures do not permit people with signs or symptoms suggestive of AIDS to give blood.

MYTH: Because of the risk of AIDS, it is best to stay away from the blood supply.

FACT: The only way to assure a safe and adequate blood supply is for healthy people to donate blood regularly. A blood shortage would endanger the lives of hundreds of thousands of people; this could include a family member, a neighbor, or you!

MYTH: I should refuse surgery or a transfusion because of the AIDS danger.

FACT: The threat to life is far greater by refusing needed treatment than the remote chance of contracting a disease from a blood transfusion. The chances of dying from a bee sting are greater than acquiring AIDS from a blood transfusion. Blood is a medicine, and its use entails certain risks, as with any medicine. The benefits of receiving needed blood, however, far outweigh the risks.

MYTH: Because of AIDS and other diseases, the blood supply is less reliable and less safe.

FACT: Because of strict donor screening procedures, effective donor education, deferral criteria, and advances in testing technology, the blood supply is the safest it’s ever been. Also, physicians are using blood sparingly and only when medically necessary.

YOU CANNOT GET AIDS FROM DONATING BLOOD!!!