Contact Staff

GO

Search VDH

Home | VDH Programs | Find It! A-Z Index | Newsroom | Local Health Districts

OFHS Home

Virginia Bleeding Disorder Program Enrollment

Comprehensive Bleeding **Disorder Centers**

Von Willebrand Disease

Virginia Hemophilia **Advisory Board**

Resources

Presentations

Bleeding Disorders Home

Children with Special Health Care Needs Home Home > Virginia Bleeding Disorders Program > Von Willebrand Disease

Quick Links VBDP Application

Von Willebrand Disease

What is von Willebrand Disease?

Von Willebrand Disease is the most common of all inherited bleeding disorders. A person can have a very mild form of the disease without many bleeding problems or the form of the disease can be more severe and cause more bleeding problems.

What is von Willebrand Factor?

There are a lot of proteins in a person's blood that help form a clot when needed to stop bleeding. One of these protein is called von Willebrand Factor. Von Willebrand Factor is a glue-like, sticky protein that carries Factor 8 which is another protein in the blood that helps you clot. It also helps platelets stick to the blood vessel wall when needed to "plug" up a hole that is causing bleeding. When there is not enough von Willebrand Factor in the blood or when the von Willebrand Factor does not work well, a person has von Willebrand Disease.

What are the symptoms of von Willebrand Disease?

People with this disease often have more problems with gum bleeding after dental work or frequent nosebleeds. They can also have more bruising than the normal person or have heavy bleeding after surgery, dental work or a cut or other accident. If a woman has the disease, she can often have a heavy bleeding with her menstrual periods.

How is von Willebrand Disease diagnosed?

If the diagnosis of von Willebrand Disease is suspected, a doctor will question that person to see if anyone else in the family has had bleeding problems because it is an inherited disorder. Also some blood samples will be drawn to see how much von Willebrand Factor and Factor 8 are actually in the blood. Sometimes these blood samples need to be repeated to get accurate results.

How is von Willebrand Disease treated?

Many medicines can be used to stop the bleeding related to von Willebrand Disease. The type of treatment depends on how severe a person's von Willebrand Disease is and where the bleeding is in the body. These medications can be used before a surgery or dental procedures to help prevent bleeding or they can be used to help stop any bleeding that has occurred. One of these medications actually has von Willebrand Factor in it and can be given in the vein to help stop bleeding. This is often needed for more severe forms of the disease. Another medication called Stimate (DDAVP) is in the form of a nose spray and can help increase the amount of von Willebrand Factor in the blood for a long enough time to stop the bleeding. This often works for milder forms of the disease. Birth control pills are often the best way to help control increased bleeding with menstrual periods. A liquid medication called Amicar can be taken by mouth and is often helpful in stopping bleeding, especially in the mouth after dental work. Your doctor will help decide which treatment is best for you.

Can von Willebrand Disease be cured?

VWD can't be cured, but it can be treated. With the right treatment, people who have VWD can lead normal, active lives

Download Documents and PowerPoint:

- Screening for Von Willebrand Disease
- Von Willebrand Disease Patient Information
- Von Willebrand Disease Presentation

For patient and health care professional information on von Willebrand Disease: http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov

rounded corner

Bleeding Disorder Email Us **VCU/VCUHS Station** PO Box 980461

Richmond, VA 23298-0461 Phone: (804) 827-3306 Fax: (804) 692-0291

rounded corner

Printable Version Last Updated: 06-24-2010

E-mail This Page

Home | Employment | Contact Us | FOIA Policy | Web Policy | Search