

## **Deferral Criteria for Travel to Countries with Mad Cow Disease (BSE)**

The FDA has issued requirements regarding donor criteria based on travel to countries where there are cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), also known as mad cow disease. The basis of the rule is the risk of transmission of variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD) by blood transfusion.

### **Donors will be indefinitely deferred if**

- From **1980 through 1996** donor has spent time that adds up to three (3) months or more in the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands Gibraltar or the Falkland Islands).
- From **1980 to the present** donor received a blood transfusion in the United Kingdom. (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands Gibraltar or the Falkland Islands).
- From **1980 through 1996** donor was a member of the U.S. military, a civilian military employee or a dependent of a member of the U.S. military **and** spent 6 months or more associated with a military base in any of the following countries:
  - From **1980 through 1990** bases in Belgium, the Netherlands or Germany
  - From **1980 through 1996** bases in Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Italy, or Greece
- From **1980 to the present** donor spent time that adds up to five (5) years or more in Europe. (**For list of European Countries involved please scroll down to 3<sup>rd</sup> page**)

**If you have further questions or would like to discuss your personal situation, please call 1-800-688-0900. One of our clinicians will be happy to help you.**

## **Questions and Answers about the new vCJD deferral criteria:**

### **Why is this being done?**

This is being done in accordance with requirements of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the federal agency that regulates blood collection in the United States. The basis of the rule is the risk of transmission by transfusion of variant Creutzfeldt Jakob Disease (vCJD). This is the human counterpart of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, sometimes called mad cow disease.

### **What is vCJD?**

It is a fatal brain disease.

### **How would a person become infected with vCJD?**

There have been over 140 cases of vCJD identified in Europe, predominantly in the UK, from 1996 through 2004. It is theorized that these individuals were infected by eating meat from infected cows.

### **If I have traveled to one of the listed countries what are my chances of being infected with vCJD?**

Extremely small, if any. As noted above, there have been very few cases identified so far. However, since there is a delay of years until a person shows sign of the disease, no one can say for sure what the occurrence will be in the future.

### **Why not just do a test for vCJD?**

No test currently exists to identify persons who are infected with vCJD.

### **If I am a vegetarian and never eat meat, can I donate?**

No, the FDA policy does not allow for any exception.

**If you have further questions or would like to discuss your personal situation, please call 1-800-688-0900. One of our clinicians will be happy to help you.**

**COUNTRIES AT RISK FOR vCJD**

**UNITED KINGDOM**

- Channel Islands
- England
- Falkland Islands
- Gibraltar
- Isle of Man
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Wales

**WESTERN EUROPE**

- Austria
- Belgium
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Ireland (Republic)
- Italy
- Liechtenstein
- Luxembourg
- Netherlands (Holland)
- Norway
- Portugal
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland

**EASTERN EUROPE**

- Albania
- Bosnia/Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Hungary
- Macedonia
- Moldova
- Poland
- Romania
- Slovakia (Slovak Rep)
- Slovenia
- Yugoslavia  
(Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia)