

## Fast Facts - About Bleeding Disorders

**Bleeding disorders** are a group of inherited conditions, which lead to a problem with the body's blood clotting process. These disorders can lead to prolonged bleeding after an injury or surgery. In severe cases, bleeding can begin on its own. Types of inherited bleeding disorders include Hemophilia A (Factor 8 deficiency), Hemophilia B (Factor 9 deficiency), von Willebrand disease (VWD), platelet disorders, and rare factor deficiencies (Factor 7, 10 and others).

**Hemophilia** is caused by a change in a gene on the X chromosome needed to make clotting factor proteins. About 20,000 individuals of all races and ethnic groups in the United States are living with hemophilia. The type of hemophilia is based upon which clotting factor is missing. The less clotting factor is made, the more severe the disease. Usually males have the disorder, and females are carriers. However, some women have lower levels of clotting factor proteins, too, causing bleeding problems.

**von Willebrand disease** (VWD) is the most common inherited bleeding disorder. Although VWD occurs equally among men and women, women are more likely to notice the symptoms because of excessive bleeding with menstrual periods or childbirth.

**Platelet disorders** are conditions in which platelets, cells in the blood that bind together to make a clot, do not work properly.

Currently, **there is no cure** for these inherited bleeding disorders. Effective treatments are available to treat and prevent bleeds, but they may require lifelong infusions of expensive drugs. Costs for an individual with severe hemophilia can be over \$200,000 per year to treat bleeding with intravenous doses of the missing clotting factor. Some people build up inhibitors to treatment and costs can exceed \$1,000,000 per year.

**Comprehensive Hemophilia Treatment Centers** (HTC's) provide access to multidisciplinary healthcare professionals and emphasize prevention to help reduce or eliminate complications. And although inherited bleeding disorders can lead to chronic health problems, people can live a long, healthy life if the disorder is managed properly. VHF collaborates closely with the 3 federally funded HTC's in Virginia.

**VHF** has been there for over 40 years and will continue to provide these and other services to the families and individuals living with hemophilia and other bleeding disorders. VHF is proud to be affiliated with the National Hemophilia Foundation and a member of the Hemophilia Federation of America.

### For More Information:

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