

June 10, 1965

Elston L. Belknap, M. D.
561 North Fifteenth Street
Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin

Dear Elston:

The question posed in your letter of May 17th is not the easiest one to answer authoritatively. Not that there is any likelihood of inducing lead intoxication in any one by the ordinary procedures of transfusion, but that one does not know what happens to the blood itself, with respect to the binding of the lead within the blood, after it has been shed and stored for a time. I do not believe anything of consequence will happen, but I am not sure I would have no hesitation, whatever, in using the blood of persons employed in a well-managed industry - that is, in one in which the hygienic control and supervision are adequate. However, I don't think I would relish being the recipient of a large volume of blood from a man who has had prolonged and severe exposure to lead, so that his blood contains well above 0.10 mg. per 100 grams. The dose of lead, per se, in this form, would not, of course, be lethal or even dangerous, but I don't know the extent or the manner of its chemical bonds. I am being over-cautious, in all likelihood, but I'd make sure that I did not collect blood from persons working in frankly hazardous occupations.

I'm afraid I can't help you or your associates in the University in replacing you in your work there. The people who could do this are too few to go around. However, if I have any bright ideas, I'll be glad to send them along.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.
Director

RAK:meh