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Dr Prakash Sankhala
Director, Swastik Hospital and Research Centre, Mumbai

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[Home](#) [Magazine](#) [Blood Collection Equipment and Devices: A Bright Outlook Ahead](#)

Blood Collection Equipment and Devices: A Bright Outlook Ahead

Sunday, 04 December 2011

The market is expected to witness a bright outlook on account of new techniques of collecting and processing blood, new blood screening tests, new blood products, proliferating gains in basic research, and execution of further automation in testing and collection.

Blood and blood components are widely used in treating patients with deficiencies related to blood, and are used in deriving numerous biopharmaceuticals (antibodies, blood factors, and others). Incidences of various infectious diseases such as dengue and chikungunya in the past have been primarily responsible for creating awareness about blood component therapy among clinicians and the general public. Shortage of blood components at the time of the last outbreak raised an alarming issue regarding the otherwise well-organized blood transfusion facility available in our country. The blood component therapy has been in existence since long, but technological advancement and the recent disease outbreaks finally managed to move people's attention to the life-saving therapy and encouraged them to consider it in a more scientific, well-organized, and consolidated manner.

The availability of the adequate supply of whole blood and its components plays a major role in deciding the course of a treatment. Although voluntary blood donation is not so popular in our country, there is now an increased awareness about the blood component therapy. Thus the demand for blood components has also increased, which in turn has helped the market prospects for blood bank centrifuges and separators to flourish.

Market Dynamics

The global market for blood banking and blood products is exhibiting a healthy trend. The blood banking devices market is expected to grow further in the coming years owing to the continuous developments and rising demand for better blood collection and transfusion technology. The global market for blood banking products is expected to reach Rs. 172,800 crore (US\$ 36 billion) by 2015. Technological advancements in the medical devices sector have led to the development of automated blood collection devices, which make the process highly sophisticated and reduce the risk of contamination.

New infections continue to take a toll on the population across the world, fueling the demand for blood banking and blood products. Regulatory and healthcare bodies across the world are adopting stringent policies relating to blood safety. As an extension to this, manufacturers are working on developing improved, safer, and advanced blood-banking technologies for the collection, processing, and delivery of blood products, further adding fuel to market growth.

The United States constitutes the largest regional market for blood banking and blood products, where 2 percent of the population receives transfusions annually, another 15 percent undergoes transfusion at least once in their lifetime. On an average, around 50-70 million units of blood and blood components are transfused in developed countries every year. The developed markets are characterized by increased levels of public awareness, sophistication of blood collection technologies, and governmental support. While developed countries bank blood resources to suffice about 80 percent of their needs, blood supplies in the developing countries just suffice 40 percent of the requirements.

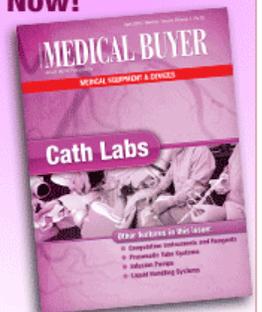
The total market for blood bank centrifuges in 2009-10 ranges between Rs. 100 and 120 crore and make up roughly 5000 units in terms of volume. The Indian market for blood bank centrifuges is estimated at Rs. 26.75 crore for the year 2010, with 210 units of blood centrifuges installed. This segment can again be further subdivided into various sub segments that include high-speed centrifuges, ultra-centrifuges, table-top centrifuges, and industrial centrifuges. The market size for ultra-centrifuges was between Rs. 24 and 34 crore (US\$ 5 and 7 million), while the market size for high-speed centrifuges stood at Rs. 9.6 crore (US\$ 2 million) in 2009-10.

Increasing population in developing countries such as India and China puts pressure on demand for blood on the blood bank segment. The governments of these countries are focused on enhancing healthcare delivery, which includes the blood bank segment. Resultantly, the Asia-Pacific region is projected to emerge as the fastest growing regional market over the analysis period.

Market Trends



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The fear of blood-borne pathogens during blood transfusion has affected the blood bank equipment market in the past. Blood collection equipment and devices manufacturers have modified their products according to the needs of the market. Major companies are forming strategic alliances with software and computer firms for innovation in automation of their products. Automation reduces human intervention and simplifies the procedure to a great extent. The important aspect of using automated systems in blood banking is the requirement of fewer numbers of trained professionals for handling blood and its components. Collecting and processing blood through automated devices is time-saving, and increases efficiency. Quality management can also be better ensured. The manufacturing companies are targeting the drug manufacturing companies and research laboratories that experiment with blood and other organic products. The major players in this segment are broadening their product offerings through research and development partnerships with firms that are not directly involved in blood banking. The cost of development and demand for speed and quality research has encouraged firms to make strategic alliances with high-technology entities that can aid product development. The strong presence of biotechnology and pharmaceutical market has helped the blood component industry to mark its presence in the market. The government is also making considerable efforts to maintain and promote the proper use of blood components for the utmost utilization of blood.

Safety Issues

Though blood and blood products provided by blood banks are free from viruses, bacteria, and other disease-causing microorganisms, safety has become the main issue the world over. Risks involved in blood transfusion have also become a major issue in the blood banks, and blood products industry. Many companies are now visualizing blood decontamination as a step toward blood safety and availability. Though the process does not do away with the traditional blood screening, and donor exclusion programs, it is expected to prevent infected transmission. New processes are being developed to make blood supply safer. Areas such as blood filtration and pathogen passivation methods are witnessing development. The need for safe and suitable blood has been the driving force behind the blood banking and blood products industry.

The global blood banking and blood products market is dominated by blood components and plasma products. The market for blood components and plasma products comprises whole blood and cellular components, and plasma fractions. Equipment, blood tests, and other consumables are forecast to witness a compounded annual growth rate of more than 4.0 percent during the analysis period. The rising public demand for safer blood donation and transfusion services is more likely to make way for technologically competent equipment to cater to the needs of the people.

Growth Factors

The major factors driving the market growth include the increasing need for blood and blood products and popularity of cord blood. Growth is also being driven by an increase in the demand for good-quality and safe blood in the country. The high number of cases that require blood or blood components for therapeutic purposes may help in maintaining a steady demand for blood bank centrifuges as well as for the separators. The improving healthcare infrastructure is another major factor since there is an increase in the number of blood banks being set up by the government and by private organizations. There has been a drastic increase in the upgradation of equipment in government blood banking facilities in the recent years. Component collection is gaining importance in India. In the coming years, more component blood banks are expected to come up, which will act as a major boost for market growth. After-sales-service facility and trained service staff provided by the manufacturers are also key factors responsible for market growth.

The USFDA-approved device is initiating a new era of thawing and warming of blood components and it is bound to grow on a faster pace. The thawing of plasma and warming is an important process in a blood bank to ensure the proper temperature and hygiene of plasma and stem cells, issued for patients. The introduction of new devices has given due importance to various aspects of the thawing process. We are sure that there will be more such innovations toward achieving newer heights of standards for blood banking procedures.

Sunil Saraf
Executive Director,
REMI Sales & Engineering Ltd.



Sunil Saraf
Executive Director,
REMI Sales & Engineering Ltd.

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