



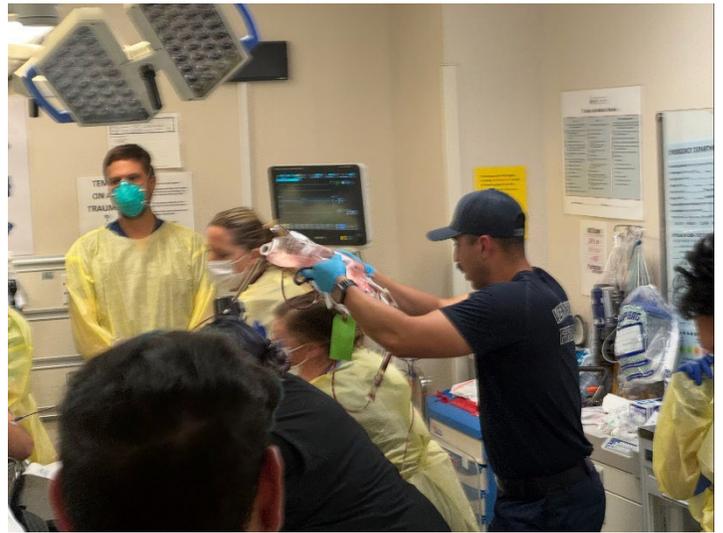
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Ventura County Fire Paramedics Administer First Whole Blood Transfusion in the Field – A Statewide First

Ventura County, CA — In a landmark moment for emergency medical services, Ventura County Fire Department (VCFD) paramedics assigned to Rescue Ambulance 50 administered the first-ever prehospital whole blood transfusion in the state of California during a response in the City of Oxnard last night.

The historic incident underscores the success of a highly coordinated, multi-agency effort involving the Ventura County Fire Department, the Ventura County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency, and Ventura County Medical Center (VCMC) — all working together to bring this advanced lifesaving capability to the field.



Rescue Ambulance 50 responded to a call for a male victim suffering from a stab wound to the upper thigh area that had punctured an artery. The incident, which occurred in Oxnard, involved close collaboration with Oxnard Police and Fire Departments and Gold Coast Ambulance.

Initial on-scene care provided by Oxnard Police officers, Oxnard Fire paramedics, and Gold Coast paramedics included tourniquet application, direct pressure, wound packing, and the administration of tranexamic acid (TXA), a medication that helps control bleeding by supporting clot formation. When VCFD paramedics arrived, they grabbed the whole blood gear from RA50 and jumped in the Gold Coast ambulance. The patient was in critical condition: pale, clammy skin, and drifting in and out of consciousness.

While transporting the patient to Ventura County Medical Center, VCFD paramedics quickly prepared and administered a unit of whole blood — the first such transfusion performed by field paramedics in California. The response was swift and effective. The patient's vital signs improved en route: skin signs normalized, and the patient regained consciousness and was able to speak to the crew.

“This successful transfusion in the field is a direct result of vision, training, and strong partnerships,” said Fire Chief Dustin Gardner. “It represents a new era in prehospital trauma care and showcases the innovative spirit of Ventura County’s public safety and medical community.”

“This is why we do this,” added Dr. Thomas Duncan, Trauma Medical Director at VCMC. “Saving time saves lives. The patient received critical blood volume replacement minutes after injury — a game-changer that increases survival odds dramatically.”

The emergency whole blood program is the result of extensive planning and collaboration between VCFD, Ventura County EMS Agency, and Ventura County Medical Center, with support from blood provider Vitalant. Together, the agencies developed rigorous protocols and field training to ensure that paramedics are equipped and prepared to deliver this advanced level of trauma care.

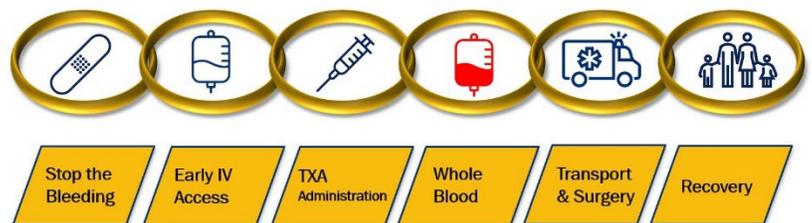
As part of the pilot program, whole blood units are now carried on designated VCFD Rescue Ambulances, ready for immediate deployment during life-threatening emergencies involving major blood loss.

“This successful first transfusion validates our collective effort and highlights what’s possible when agencies work together with a shared commitment to innovation and saving lives,” said Dr. Daniel Shepherd, Medical Director of the Ventura County EMS Agency. “The system performed extraordinarily well—beginning with the police department, who were first on scene and immediately began efforts to control the bleeding, followed by the ambulance arriving in under four minutes, and the entire team completing complex on-scene care in under seven. The time from the 911 call to the start of the transfusion was under twenty minutes. That’s incredible. PD, Fire, and EMS came together to deliver not just exceptional prehospital care, but truly outstanding medical care.”

The groundbreaking use of field transfusion in this case has already demonstrated its lifesaving potential — and Ventura County is proud to lead the way in setting a new standard for trauma care across California.

Call Details:

Call Date: 4/10/2025
911 call received: 9:01 pm
Ambulance on scene: 9:05 pm
Oxnard Fire on scene: 9:06 pm
VCFD on scene: 9:09 p.m.
Depart to hospital: 9:11 pm
Transfusion Start: 9:13
Transfusion End: 9:22



Graphic: Whole Blood added to the Trauma Chain of Survival.