

# Intravenous release

**Bloodletting** or **intravenous release** is the removal of a small amount of blood in order to treat or prevent disease. Venous tapping is based on the ancient medical idea that a patient's health is related to the balance of bodily fluids. The introduction of this technique is often attributed to Galen, who described and used the method, but venipuncture had been practiced earlier in Mesopotamia or Egypt. The use of this technique persisted for more than 2000 years until the end of the 19th century. From the point of view of modern medicine, the method is suitable in only a few cases and in all others it is harmful to the patient.

At present, the method is indicated for secondary polyglobulia, disease states caused by increased perythrocyte counts and some types of cutaneous porphyria.

## Interesting facts

Previously, before the discovery of vasodilators, the method was also used successfully in the treatment of sudden cardiac failure. When the left ventricle of the heart, which removes blood from the pulmonary circulation and pumps it into the great circulatory system, fails, the blood accumulates under increased pressure in the pulmonary circulation, the fluid from it leaks into the pulmonary chambers, filling them, and the patient actually "drowns" in his own body fluid. By removing a few decilitres of blood, the blood pressure is reduced, even in the pulmonary circulation, and the patient can be substantially relieved within tens of minutes.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Links

### Related articles

- Venopunction
- Hemochromatosis

### References

1. ČIERNÍK, Matej. Smutné omyly medicíny. Objective Source E- Learning [online]. Praha, 12.10.2011 [cit. 2012-05-14]. Dostupné z: <http://www.osel.cz/5925-smutne-omyly-mediciny.html>