



Health Bulletin



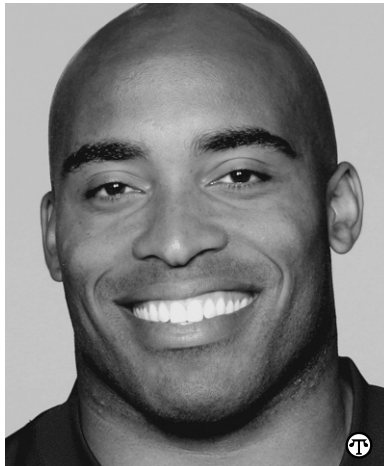
Football Superstar Tiki Barber Says “Be Sickle Smart”

(NAPSA)—On the football field, Tiki Barber is a fearless competitor who knows what it takes to lead his team to victory. Off the field, he is using that same determination to help educate children and their families about sickle cell disease and iron overload. Iron overload, or too much iron, is a dangerous potential complication of regular blood transfusions, often used to treat sickle cell disease.

Barber, All-Pro running back and a long-time children’s advocate, is spearheading a national awareness campaign called Be Sickle Smart: Ask Tiki About Iron, to empower those living with sickle cell disease to take an active role in their health so they continue on a path for a bright future.

“I’m determined to get the message out that it’s really important for people who get blood transfusions for sickle cell disease — as well as their families — to know about excess iron and to talk to their doctor about their risk of iron overload,” said Barber.

In sickle cell disease, red blood cells become deformed and can block blood vessels. This causes pain, can damage tissues and organs and can lead to stroke if the blockage occurs in the brain. The lack of healthy red blood cells



Tiki Barber wants people who get blood transfusions for sickle cell disease to Be Sickle Smart. Visit www.AskTiki.com or call (877) SCD-TIKI (723-8454).

leads to anemia, which can cause many problems, including fatigue. While there is no cure for sickle cell disease, early diagnosis can help people live longer, healthier and more productive lives.

Blood transfusions give back healthy red blood cells, but they also contain iron. As few as 10 transfusions may lead to too much iron in organs such as the liver and heart. Since there are not always telltale signs of iron

overload, people may not realize they are at risk.

The good news is that iron overload can be detected with a simple blood test and treated. An iron chelator (kē-lāt-@ r) is an agent that binds to iron in the body and helps remove it. Iron chelation is the only effective drug therapy to treat and prevent the complications of iron overload. Your health care professional can tell you if you or your child is at risk, check iron levels and share what’s available in iron chelation.

Visit www.AskTiki.com or call (877) SCD-TIKI (723-8454) to learn more and receive FREE information.

If you (or your loved one) have received blood transfusions, you may want to ask your doctor:

1. Have I received 10 or more blood transfusions in the past?
2. What is my iron level (serum ferritin levels)? Is that too high?
3. When should I have another test performed to see if I am at risk of too much iron?
4. Do you see any clinical evidence that I have too much iron or iron overload? 