



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

Object 11: Factor VIII



What is it?

Factor VIII is a protein in the blood that is essential for normal blood clotting. Too much Factor VIII increases the risks of blood clots; too little may result in excessive bleeding.

The gene for Factor VIII is on the X chromosome. A defect in the gene results in too little Factor VIII being produced and leads to a condition called haemophilia A.

History

Patients with haemophilia were described over 2000 years ago but it wasn't until 1937 that the condition was shown to be linked to a deficiency of a protein in the blood. Queen Victoria was a famous carrier of haemophilia, passing on the faulty gene to many of the royal families of Europe through her children.

Pathology

Haematology is the pathology specialty involved in the study and treatment of disorders of the blood, including clotting disorders such as haemophilia A. Haematologists have developed increasingly safe treatments for haemophilia over the last 50 years and have significantly improved the life expectancy of haemophilia sufferers.

Find out more

[The Haemophilia Society](#) provides information about the condition and support for those affected.