What is a bleeding disorder?

Haemophilia

- A rare genetic bleeding disorder where the blood doesn't clot properly
- Caused by an alteration in the gene making clotting factor VIII (8) or IX (9)
- Usually inherited, but 1/3 of people have no previous family history
- A lifelong condition and can be life-threatening without treatment
- Treatment can help prevent repeated bleeding into muscles and joints, which causes arthritis and joint problems
- Women and men can have the gene alteration causing haemophilia and pass it on to their children
- Most people diagnosed with haemophilia are male
- 20-30% of females who carry the gene alteration have bleeding problems and may have haemophilia, usually mild.

Von Willebrand disease (VWD)

- A hereditary genetic bleeding disorder
- Occurs when people do not have enough of a protein called von Willebrand factor (VWF) in their blood or it does not work properly
- Bleeding problems can vary a lot between people with VWD. Some people experience little or no disruption to their lives unless they have serious injuries or surgery, and others bleed quite often. There can be bleeding problems with all types of VWD.
- Many people are not aware they have the disorder and are currently undiagnosed
- Both men and women can have VWD and pass it on to their children.

Other bleeding disorders

- Other bleeding disorders include rare clotting factor deficiencies, inherited platelet disorders and acquired haemophilia and VWD.
- Factor XI (11) deficiency is the third most common bleeding disorder to affect women after VWD and haemophilia. It is estimated to occur in 1 in 100,000 people.

How common?

In Australia there are more than 7,400 people diagnosed with haemophilia, von Willebrand disease or other rare bleeding disorders.

Image: Freepik

NEW POSSIBILITIES

Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month

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