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Ireland orders transfusion for baby of Jehovah's Witnesses

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By Lauren Strapagiel

An Irish court has ordered a life-saving blood transfusion for the infant of a Jehovah's Witness.

The couple's baby boy came down with bronchitis on Dec. 25 and was placed in hospital the following day due to low hemoglobin levels which restricts oxygen flow to the organs.

The usual procedure in this situation is a blood transfusion, however Jehovah's Witnesses believe that blood should not be ingested, including transfusions.

Doctors decided the only way to save the boy was by transfusion and when the parents refused, the court ordered the transfusion.

According to RTÉ, the judge in the case decided the courts had the right to order the transfusion over the parents' religious beliefs, because the child's life was in danger. The written judgment was published Wednesday.

In January 2007, the British Columbia government sparked a [debate over religious rights](#) with a Vancouver-area Jehovah's Witness family after the parents had refused blood transfusions for the preterm baby.

The transfusions were given against the wishes of the parents with the [B.C. Supreme Court](#) later ruling that the parents' rights were violated.

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