



Blood Donation Basics

Special points of interest:

- Why Should you Donate Blood
- Steps to Donate Blood
- Additional Information about Donating
- When to Talk to Your Doctor Before Donating
- Am I Eligible to Donate?
- Where can I donate?

Why Should you Donate Blood?

There are about 320 million people living in the United States and about 4.5 million of these people require a blood transfusion every year. That's about 1 transfusion for every 100 people! There are numerous reasons to donate blood and numbers are expected to rise:

- As the population grows older, the number of surgeries that require transfusions also rises
- Procedures and surgeries that require transfusions are becoming more common
- Car accidents, cancer patients, surgery, burns, childbirth and other situations

Although there are numerous reasons to donate, only 5% of Americans who are able to give blood actually do. Since blood cannot be manufactured, the only way to keep blood banks full, is to have people donate.

Help save lives



Steps to Donate Blood

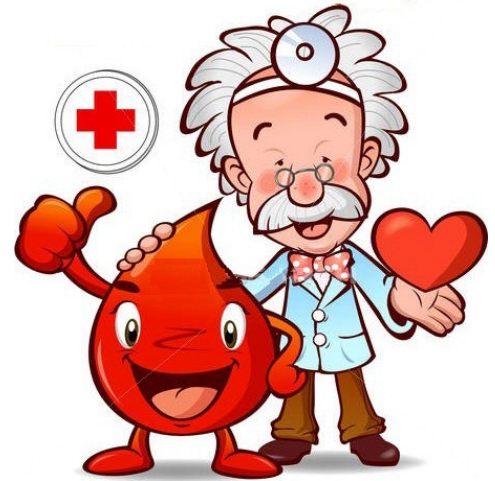
- 1** Once you have arrived at the blood donation center, you will be asked to fill out some paperwork and talk with someone regarding your general health and lifestyle (including sexual activity and drug use). Make sure you are completely truthful to ensure your safety, as well as that of the receiver. Any information you provide is strictly confidential. You also will have your temperature, blood pressure, blood count, and pulse checked to make sure you are healthy enough to donate.
- 2** After sitting or lying down, you will have a technician clean the area of your arm where the blood will be drawn. The vein will usually become visible after gently tapping the area with a finger or squeezing a small object. The arm may also be tied off to swell the vein briefly. A needle is then inserted and blood will begin flowing into a bag for storage. This typically takes 10-20 minutes.
- 3** Once the blood donation is complete, you will spend a few minutes resting and having juice and a snack. Make sure you stay for 10-15 minutes to make sure you feel okay. In some instances, people may feel weak, dizzy or faint due to the drop in blood pressure.



Additional Information about Donating

After being donated, blood is separated into 3 components: red blood cells, platelets, and plasma. Each individual component has its own expiration date: red blood cells can be stored for 42 days, platelets can last 5 days, and plasma can be frozen for as long as 1 year. You can donate whole blood every 8 weeks, platelets 24 times a year and plasma twice weekly.

Additionally, the patient should be at least 17 years old, weight at least 110 pounds, and in good health.



When to Talk to Your Doctor Before Donating

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| 1. You have received a blood transfusion from someone in the US | 5. You had hepatitis (inflammation of the liver) caused by a virus, or unexplained yellowing of the skin since age 11 (jaundice) | 8. You have active tuberculosis or have been treated |
| 2. You have received a blood transfusion in certain countries in Africa since 1977 | 6. You have HIV/AIDS or are at risk | 9. You have had sex for money or drugs since 1977 |
| 3. You had leukemia or lymphoma, including Hodgkin's Disease | 7. You have ever received clotting factor concentrates | 10. Other circumstances |
| 4. You are taking any | | |

Am I Eligible to Donate?

Generally, people who are at least 17 years old, weight at least 110 pounds, and are in good health can donate. Talk to your doctor about your health conditions if you are unsure.

Where can I Donate?

There are many colleges, hospitals, and other associations that sponsor blood drives. Additionally, you can call the following organizations for more information:

National Red Cross hotline: 1-800-GIVE-LIFE

America's Blood Centers: 1-888-256-6388

AABC: 1-866-376-6968

