

Donating Blood

Basic Donor Requirements

- Be in good health.
- Be 18 – 60(65) years
- Weigh at least 110 pounds.
- Haemoglobin required is minimum 12.5 gm %

Before You Donate

- *Drink plenty of water.*
Keep your body hydrated in preparation for a loss in body fluid. Avoid coffee, alcohol or caffeinated beverages that dehydrate the body.
- *Get adequate rest.*
Typically, you should get eight hours of sleep the night before your donation.
- *Eat a hearty meal.*
Be sure to have a good breakfast in the morning of your donation and full meals throughout the day.
- *Include iron-rich foods in your diet.*
An iron rich diet can help keep hemoglobin levels within an acceptable range for donating. Consistent, long-term consumption of meats, leafy green and/or other iron-rich foods is the key.
- *Know the medical conditions you have and the medications you're taking.*
For your safety and the safety of blood recipients, donors on certain medications may be deferred or required to wait before donating. Insulin treatments for diabetes are among the unaccepted medications.

The Donation Process

From registration to refreshments, the entire process of donating blood takes about an hour and includes the following six steps:

1. *Paperwork*
Each donor is given a questionnaire to fill out.
2. *Mini physical*
A Blood Bank staff member will check your blood pressure, pulse, temperature and hemoglobin level.
3. *Confidential interview*
A Blood Bank staff member will review your medical history with you.
4. *Collection*
The actual collection of blood takes only five to eight minutes. A new, sterile and disposable needle is used to draw one pint of your blood.
5. *Rest*
Remain seated for a few minutes. Drink lots of liquids to help replenish your fluids.
6. *Eat*
Be sure to have some refreshments before you leave and enjoy hearty meals throughout the day.

After You Donate

- Drinking lots of fluids (eight 8-ounce glasses) will replace the fluid volume lost in less than a day, and proteins and plasma within 72 hours. Within six weeks your red blood cells are restored.
- Eat a healthy, hearty meal.
- Leave the bandage on your arm for at least four hours and avoid strenuous physical activity for 24 hours.
- Avoid smoking for the next half hour and alcohol.
- If you feel anything out of the ordinary after you leave the Blood Bank's donor center or mobile, immediately lie down, and then call the Blood Bank's nursing services at 845-9966 ext. 739 for guidance.
- If you have any reason to believe your blood may not be safe to give to another person, please call us immediately.

Questions about Eligibility

Some health conditions or medications may temporarily or permanently prevent persons from donating blood.

Medical Conditions

AIDS-individuals at high risk and their partners	<i>cannot donate</i>
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Colds and flu	<i>cannot donate</i>
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Diabetes	
on injectable insulin	<i>cannot donate</i>
on oral medications (controlled)	<i>can donate</i>

Hepatitis and Jaundice	
after Age 11	<i>cannot donate</i>

Malaria	
in malaria area	<i>contact BBH</i>
(with or without medications)	<i>cannot donate</i>

Pregnancy	
after delivery, miscarriage, abortion	<i>six-week wait</i>

Menstruation	<i>can donate</i>
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Medical Procedures

Surgery

without transfusion *can donate*

with transfusion of blood or blood components *1-year wait*

Medications

Antibiotics

oral *seven day wait from last dose*

injectable *seven day wait from last dose*

Allergy Medications, Diuretics, Diet Pills, Sleeping Pills, Tranquilizers, Aspirin, Tylenol

can donate

Blood Pressure Medication

can donate

Vaccinations

Measles, Mumps, Rubella *one-month wait*

Flu *can donate*

Hepatitis B *can donate*

Other Possible Restrictions

Ear Piercing

professionally done *can donate*

non-professionally done *12-month wait*

Tattooing *12-month wait*

Body Piercing *12-month wait*

Donation Process

- Prospective donors first complete a health history questionnaire and screening interview.
- The next step involves a brief physical examination of blood pressure, pulse, temperature and a test for blood count.
- If the prescribed medical requirements are met, a unit (about one pint) of blood is drawn from the donor. After resting for 5 minutes, donors are served refreshments.
- The entire process usually takes less than one hour.

You Cannot Get AIDS from Donating Blood

Only sterile, disposable equipment is used throughout the donation process, which makes it virtually impossible to contract a disease from donating blood.

1. Who can donate?

The qualifications to be a blood donor are simple.

- Be in good health
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Weigh at least 110 pounds
- Haemoglobin at least 12.5 gm %

2. Why should I donate blood?

Everyday, hundreds of people's lives depend of volunteer blood donors. By giving the gift of life, you'll help to ensure that blood will be there for you, the people you love, and anyone else who needs it.

3. How long does it take to give blood?

Plan to spend an hour for the entire blood donation process, which includes some paper work and a mini physical. The actual blood collection of blood takes just 5 to 8 minutes. After donating, you will rest, enjoy refreshments and experience the satisfaction of knowing that you just saved up to three lives. It will be the best hour of your day.

4. Does donating blood hurt?

Comfort levels vary from person to person but many donors say there is nothing to it. You will feel a slight pinch and it is all over before you know it!

5. How much blood is taken?

A skilled, specially trained technician will draw one pint.

6. Is it safe to give blood?

Yes. All supplies used to collect blood are completely sterile and used only once. You can't contract HIV or other infections diseases from donating blood.

7. How will I feel afterwards?

After resting for five minutes and enjoying refreshments to replenish your fluids, you should feel just fine and ready to continue your daily activities. You should refrain from heavy lifting or extreme physical exertion for 24 hours. If in the rare event you experience any complications please contact our department at

8. What happens to my blood after I donate?

The blood is taken to our laboratory, where it is separated into three components: red blood cells, platelets and plasma. Different tests are performed to ensure safety and then the lifesaving products are issued to patients for use.

9. What blood tests are performed on the blood?

Several tests are done to ensure the safety of the blood. These include blood type, HIV, Hepatitis B and C, Syphilis and Malaria.

10. Who receives my blood?

Blood donations help people of all ages and walks of life. Typical recipients include cancer patients, mothers and their babies during and after delivery, bleeding ulcers and other forms of treatment, open-heart surgery patients and accident and trauma victims.

11. Does my donation really make a difference?

Your single donation can help save up to three lives.

12. What is plateletpheresis?

Another type of donation available to donors is plateletpheresis. These donors give only platelets, which are special cells in the blood used by your body to heal wounds and clot blood, and the rest is returned to your body. This type of donation is open to experienced donors with adequate veins and high platelet counts. The collection process is similar to whole blood donation, but can take up to two hours. Plateletpheresis donors are eligible to give the gift of life every two weeks up to a maximum of four times in eight weeks or 24 times a year.

13. How often can I donate?

You need to wait 56 days or 8 weeks between whole blood donations to allow your red blood cells to replenish. Plateletpheresis donors need to wait 14 days or 2 weeks between donations.

14. What should I do prepare for my donation?

Drink eight to 10 glasses of water within the 24 hours prior to your appointment; eat

a healthy, hearty meal; and get adequate rest.

15. What should I do after donating?

Drink plenty of fluid, refrain from strenuous exercise or heavy lifting for 24 hours, and eat a healthy, hearty meal.

16. How much blood do I have in my body?

As a general rule, you have one pint of blood for every 10 to 12 pounds of body weight.

17. Is there a minimum or maximum age limit on donating blood?

Donors must be at least 18 years of age.

18. How long until my blood is used?

Blood donations are available for use within 24 hours after being processed into three components (red blood cells, platelets and plasma) and tested.

19. Are blood products perishable?

Yes. When refrigerated, red blood cells can be stored for up to 42 days. Plasma is frozen and stored for up to one year. Platelets can be stored for five days.

20. Are the health history questions necessary every time?

The Food and Drug Administration requires that all blood centers ask about your medical history every time you donate to ensure the safety of the blood supply.

21. Are the health history questions and my test results confidential?

Your answers and test results will be kept confidential, except where required by law. The Blood Bank maintains strict privacy guidelines for all blood donor records.

22. I was deferred for low iron (hemoglobin) count. How can I increase it?

Being deferred for low iron count doesn't mean you are anemic. Eating a consistent iron-rich diet including foods such as red meat, dark green vegetables and dried fruits, will help increase iron levels. Taking a multivitamin with iron may also help.

23. Does the Blood Bank pay donors for giving blood?

The Blood Bank collects blood from volunteer donors and does not offer any type of payment. To do so would be a violation of [Food and Drug Administration](#) regulations. Studies have shown that volunteer donors provide the safest blood supply. However, there is the reward of knowing that your one donation will save up to three lives.

24. May someone accompany me into the donor history area or onto the donor floor?

Due to the risk of exposure to blood and needles and the need for confidentiality during the interview process, your companions must remain in the canteen or waiting areas.

25. Can I eat before I donate?

You should eat a hearty, healthy meal and drink plenty of fluids before donating. It's also important to have a good night's sleep as well.

26. Can I exercise right after donating?

No. You should avoid strenuous activity and heavy lifting for about 24 hours after donating.

27. Is my blood tested before it is used?

Every time you donate, blood samples are taken for testing. These tests are to detect your blood type and viruses such as Hepatitis and HIV. If any of the viral tests is positive, your unit will not be used and you will be notified.

28. What blood type is the universal donor?

Type O- is the universal donor and can give red blood cells to any other type because it is compatible with all four major blood types: A, B, AB and O.

29. If I have a cold or the flu, can I donate blood?

For your safety and the safety of the blood supply, the Blood Bank requires that you're in good health and symptom-free for at least 72 hours.

30. Do I need to make an appointment to donate blood or do you take walk-ins?

It is recommended that you make an appointment prior to your donation, but it is not required. Walk-ins are welcome.

31. Can I donate my own blood for surgery?

Individuals can donate their blood for their own upcoming surgical needs, if prescribed by a physician.

32. What if I want my blood to go to a specific person?

Donations are made available to anyone in need. Donations can be directed to a specific person only if there is a medical necessity.

36. Can I donate if I'm taking medication?

Most medications are acceptable, including all common blood pressure medications. Aspirin and ibuprofen are okay, as long as the donor is feeling fine during the time of their appointment. Birth control pills and cholesterol-regulating drugs are acceptable. Those taking allergy medications can donate as long as the donor is not experiencing

symptoms at the time of donation. If donors have received antibiotics, they will be able to donate seven days after the last dose, if they have been symptom-free for 72 hours. For more information, discuss with doctor on duty.

37. Can I donate if I just received a flu shot?

Those who recently received shots and vaccines can donate as long as they are symptom-free and don't experience a fever from the vaccinations.

38. Can I donate if I'm a diabetic?

Those who take oral anti-diabetic medications can donate. If you are dependent on insulin injections, you will not be able to donate.

39. What can I do if I'm not eligible to donate?

You can support our blood center and help save lives by encouraging friends and family to give; coordinating blood drives at your office, school, church or community center; or volunteering at the Donor Center.