

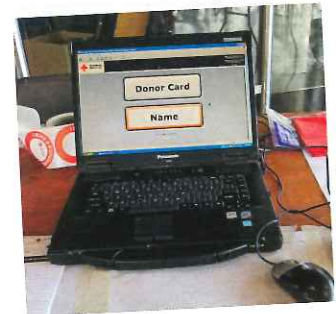
# The Donation Process



**Giving whole blood is simple.** The donation process, from the time you arrive until the time you leave, takes about an hour. The donation itself is only about 10 minutes. And the satisfaction you get from knowing you've helped change a life? Timeless.

## Step 1: Registration

- You will read information about donating blood.
- You will be asked to complete a form with demographic and basic health information.
- You will be asked to show an American Red Cross donor card or positive ID.



## Step 2: Health history and mini physical

- A trained staff person will ask you some health history questions during a private and confidential interview.
- You will have your temperature, iron level, blood pressure and pulse checked to protect your health and well-being.



## Step 3: Donation

- Staff will cleanse an area on your arm and insert a needle for the blood drawing procedure.
- The actual process of donating blood takes approximately 7-10 minutes.
- When about a pint of blood has been collected, the staff will remove the needle and place a bandage on your arm.

## Step 4: Refreshments

- You will spend a few minutes enjoying refreshments so your body can adjust to the slight decrease in fluid volume.
- Enjoy the feeling of knowing you've done something good.



**Before you give:** Get a good night's sleep, have a good breakfast or lunch, drink extra water and fluids (but avoid tea, coffee or caffeinated beverages), eat iron-rich foods like fortified cereals and broccoli, and avoid fatty foods like hamburgers, fries or ice cream.

**While you give:** Wear clothing with sleeves that can be raised above the elbow, show the staff "good veins" that have been used to draw blood in the past, and don't forget to relax.

**After you give:** Enjoy a snack and drink in our refreshment area. Drink plenty of fluids in the next 24 to 48 hours, avoid strenuous physical activity or heavy lifting for about five hours, and eat a well-balanced meal.

**Remember:** Donors seldom experience discomfort after giving, but if you feel light-headed, lie down until the feeling goes away. If bleeding occurs after you take off your bandage, apply pressure to the site and raise your arm until the bleeding stops. If bruising or bleeding appears under the skin, apply a cold pack. And if for any reason, something doesn't feel right, call the post-donation number at 1-866-236-3276.

**Wear your badge of honor proudly! You've earned it!**



# How to Prepare for a Great Donation Experience



**American  
Red Cross**



The American Red Cross wants your donation to be as safe and successful as possible. The following suggestions may help you prepare for your blood donation.

## Between donations

**Give your body plenty of iron.** When you donate whole blood or double red cells, your body loses some iron contained in red blood cells. Eat plenty of iron-rich food to replace these cells between donations. Foods rich in iron include:

- red meat
- fish
- poultry
- beans
- iron-fortified cereal
- broccoli
- spinach
- raisins
- prunes

Also, foods rich in Vitamin C (such as citrus fruit) help your body absorb the iron you eat. But avoid drinking tea, coffee and other caffeinated beverages with meals since caffeine can reduce iron absorption.

## Before donation

**Sleep well.** Get a full night's sleep the night before you plan to donate.

**Eat a good breakfast or lunch.** This also will help your body be well prepared for giving blood.

## Day of donation

**Drink extra water** and fluids before you donate to replace the volume of blood you will donate. You should continue drinking extra fluids after donation, too.

**Eat the right foods.** Having foods containing protein or complex carbohydrates, such as bread, cereal, fruit or lean meat may make you feel more comfortable during and after donating.

**Avoid fatty foods,** such as hamburgers or french fries, before donating. The tests that are part of our vigorous safety screening can be affected by fatty materials that appear in your blood for several hours. When this occurs, testing cannot be performed, and we may not be able to use your blood.

**Relax!** Spend 10 to 15 minutes relaxing in the refreshment area. Have a drink and snack to rejuvenate yourself.



### To be eligible to donate blood you must:

- be at least 17 years old (16 with parental permission in some states)
- meet height and weight requirements (at least 110 pounds based on height)
- be in generally good health

### Before donating you should:

- get a good night's sleep
- drink plenty of fluids
- eat within 2-3 hours

### Be sure to bring your:

- donor card or a government issued photo I.D.
- parental consent form if you are a 16-year-old donor
- wear clothing with sleeves that can be raised above the elbow



# Common Questions About Donating Blood



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## Q: What can I expect at my donation?

A: In a confidential and private setting, you'll answer some questions about your health history and places you have traveled. We'll take your blood pressure, temperature and a small sample of your blood to test your iron level. We'll cleanse the area of your arm and insert a sterile needle, through which the blood or blood component will be drawn. After donation, you can relax in the refreshment area, enjoy a snack and beverage and take pleasure in knowing your blood donation may help save up to three lives.

## Q: Can I find out my blood type?

A: Yes. About six weeks after your donation, you will receive a donor card in the mail bearing your blood type.

## Q: How often may I donate blood?

A: You may donate whole blood every 56 days, up to six times per year; platelets every seven days, up to 24 times per year; plasma every 28 days, up to 13 times per year; and double red cells every 112 days, up to three times per year.

## Q: Will I have to limit my activities after donating?

A: We ask donors not to do any strenuous activity or heavy lifting for several hours after donating. You may want to schedule your appointment several hours before or after planned exercise.

## Q: Will I become anemic after donating?

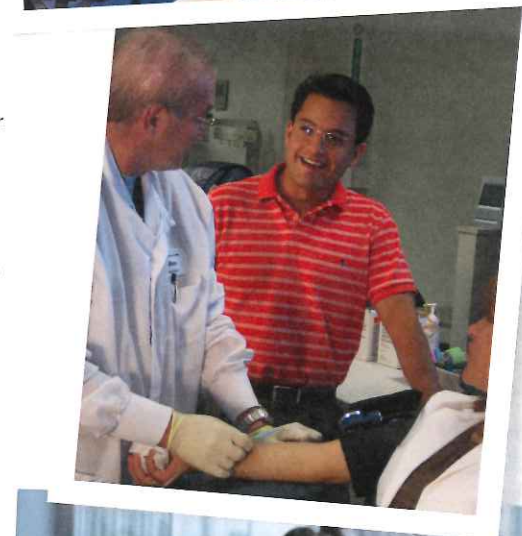
A: Most people do not become anemic after donating. The body begins replenishing lost fluid and red cells within 24 hours.

## Q: What if I have recently gotten a tattoo and/or body piercing?

A: If your tattoo was applied in a state-regulated/licensed tattoo facility using sterile needles and the ink was not reused, you may be able to donate. You may donate after receiving a body piercing as long as you are certain a sterile needle was used. Otherwise, you must wait one year after receiving a tattoo or body piercing.

## Q: I've been turned down before. Should I try again?

A: Yes. Most deferrals are temporary—not permanent. Check with Red Cross staff to find out if you can now donate.



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# Common Questions About Donating Blood



**American  
Red Cross**

**Q: What if I have high or low blood pressure?**

A: Your blood pressure will be checked before every donation. If your blood pressure is within an acceptable range, you may donate. If you take medication to control your blood pressure, you may still be eligible to donate. Please check with a Red Cross staff member to find out if you are able to donate.

**Q: Can I donate if I have been taking an antibiotic?**

A: You may be able to donate blood as long as you have taken your last dose of the prescribed course of antibiotics and have no symptoms. Please check with a Red Cross staff member to find out if you are able to donate.

**Q: If something is wrong with my blood, will I find out?**

A: Yes. You will be notified confidentially by certified mail or in rare situations by telephone.

**Q: Can I get AIDS from giving blood?**

A: No. All equipment is sterile and used only for you. You can't "catch" anything by giving blood.

**Q: If I participate in sports, can I practice or compete right after giving blood?**

A: When you give blood, you temporarily lose some fluid which your body replaces within 24 hours. So a few precautions are necessary: do not compete right after the donation and avoid strenuous activity for five hours after donating. Give your body a day to replace the volume you donated. Please consult with your coach or trainer to ensure it is appropriate for you to donate on the day of the blood drive.

**Q: Can I give blood if I have been drinking or using drugs?**

A: While the Red Cross does not encourage the use of controlled substances, marijuana or alcohol, use does not necessarily disqualify you from giving blood as long as you are feeling well. If you have EVER injected any illegal drugs, you are indefinitely ineligible.

**Q: Can I give blood if I have traveled outside the U.S.?**

A: There are specified limitations for certain travel. Some circumstances may make a person temporarily ineligible to donate blood; some cause indefinite ineligibility. If you have any questions, or if you have been told you can never donate blood again, you may wish to discuss your history with a trained Red Cross staff member since the guidelines for eligibility may have changed.

**Q: What should I do if I have more questions regarding my eligibility to donate blood?**

A: Our donor health representatives can answer any questions you may have about travel, medications or health conditions that might affect your ability to donate blood. Please call 1-866-236-3276 or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) for more information.







## American Red Cross

The following are eligibility questions commonly asked by people who are considering blood donation. Additional eligibility criteria are further explained in the eligibility section of [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org), and some state laws may apply. A person with an eligibility question should contact the American Red Cross Donor and Client Support Center at 1-866-236-3276. It is important to remember that these are examples and final donor suitability is determined at the collection site on the day of donation using standards in place at that time.

**AGE:** A person must be at least 17 years of age (or 16 where state law permits); parental consent requirements vary by state but is always required of 16 year old donors. There is no upper age limit for donation; however, some states may require medical approval for donors over age 75. Call the Donor and Client Support Center at 1-866-236-3276 for state-specific age information or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) and enter your zip code to print the parental consent form, if required.

**ALLERGY:** A person may donate as long as he or she feels well, has no fever, and has no problems breathing.

**ASTHMA:** A person may donate as long as he or she is not having difficulty breathing at the time of donation and otherwise feels well. Medications for asthma do not disqualify a person from donating.

**BLOOD PRESSURE:** A person's blood pressure must be between 80/50 and 180/100 at the time of donation. High blood pressure medications are acceptable for donation.

**BLOOD TRANSFUSION:** A person who has received a blood transfusion from a person in the U.S. must wait 12 months to be eligible to donate. A person is not eligible to donate if he/she received a blood transfusion since 1980 in the United Kingdom or France.

**CANCER:** A person with a history of leukemia, lymphoma or Hodgkin's disease and other cancers of the blood are not eligible to donate. A person with other forms of cancer may be eligible if twelve months have passed since the last treatment, with no recurrences or active disease. A person with low risk cancer (e.g., squamous or basal cell skin cancers) that has been completely removed is eligible. A person with a precancerous condition of the uterine cervix, cervical carcinoma in-situ that has been treated successfully may be eligible.

**COLD, FLU, SORE THROAT:** A person with a fever, productive cough, or other acute cold symptoms should wait until he/she feels well enough to donate. A person who has completed antibiotic treatment for and has recovered from sinus, throat, or lung infection may donate. Mild nasal congestion, a dry cough, or allergies are acceptable.

**DENTAL PROCEDURES AND ORAL SURGERY:** There is no waiting period after fillings, cleanings, root canals, scalings, or extractions, if no infection is present. A person should wait until finishing antibiotics for a dental infection and wait 3 days after oral surgery.

**DIABETES:** A diabetic person is eligible to donate if the disease is well controlled by diet, non-bovine insulin or oral medications. A diabetic person who received bovine insulin manufactured in the United Kingdom is permanently ineligible to donate.



## American Red Cross

**DONATION INTERVALS:** A whole blood donor may donate every 56 days. A double red-cell donor may donate every 112 days. A platelet donor may donate as often as every 7 days, up to a maximum of 24 times a year. A person may donate any combination of these procedures, but the donation interval will vary.

**HEART DISEASE:** In general, a person is eligible if he/she has been medically evaluated and treated, has no current (within the last six months) heart-related symptoms such as chest pain, and has no limitations or restrictions on activities of daily living. A person must wait at least six months following an episode of angina, congestive heart failure, cardiomyopathy, heart attack, or surgery (coronary artery bypass graft, angioplasty, stent placement). A donor with a pacemaker may donate as long as the pulse rate is between 50 and 100 beats per minute at the time of donation.

**HEPATITIS:** A person who has had unexplained jaundice or who, since age 11, has had infectious hepatitis caused by a virus, including hepatitis with cytomegalovirus (CMV), hepatitis with Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) associated with infectious mononucleosis is not eligible to donate. A person who has tested positive for hepatitis B or hepatitis C at any age is not eligible, even if the person was never sick or jaundiced from the infection. A person who has had jaundice or hepatitis caused by something other than a viral infection is eligible.

**IMMUNIZATION, VACCINATION:** There is no deferral period for these vaccinations: routine flu; pneumonia; human papilloma virus (HPV); meningococcal meningitis; tetanus; diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (DPT).

A person must wait two weeks after immunization for red measles (rubeola), mumps, polio (by mouth) and yellow fever.

A person must wait 21 days after immunization for hepatitis B (as long as there was no exposure to hepatitis).

A person must wait 4 weeks after immunization for German measles (rubella); measles, mumps and rubella (MMR); chicken pox; and shingles.

Other vaccinations (e.g., smallpox) require individual assessment by a Red Cross staff member.

**MEDICATIONS:** In general, most medications are acceptable, including over-the-counter oral homeopathic medications, herbal remedies and nutritional supplements. Call the Donor and Client Support Center at 1-866-236-3276 for the designated waiting periods following the last dose of the following medications: Accutane, Absorica, Amnesteem, Claravis, Myorisan, Sotret, or Zenatane (isoretinoin); Proscar or Propecia (finasteride); Avodart or Jalyn (dutasteride); Coumadin (warfarin), heparin, Pradaxa (dabigatran), Lovenox (enoxaparin sodium), Xarelto (rivaroxaban), or other prescription blood thinners; hepatitis B immune globulin; human pituitary derived growth hormone; Soriatane (acitretin); Tegison (etretinate) or aspirin, Feldene (piroxicam); Effient (prasugrel) Plavix (clopidogrel), or Ticlid (ticlopidine).

**PIERCING (ear, body):** A person may be eligible if the instrument used for the piercing was sterile or single-use. If there is any question, a person must wait 12 months.

**PREGNANCY:** A pregnant woman is not eligible to donate. A woman may donate six weeks after the end of pregnancy, and a nursing mother is eligible to donate.





# American Red Cross

**SURGERY:** A person may donate if he/she has returned to normal activity, feels well, and the underlying illness is not a disqualifying factor. A person with a sutured minor cut and/or laceration may donate if there is no infection.

**TATTOO:** A person may donate if the tattoo was applied at a state-regulated facility that uses sterile needles and single-use ink. A person must wait 12 months after having a tattoo applied in a facility that is not state-regulated, regardless whether sterile ink and needles were used. For specific states that are regulated, call the Donor and Client Support Center at 1-866-236-3276.

**TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE U.S.:** Travel restrictions vary widely, and the following are more common restrictions. For specific areas of travel, call the Donor and Client Support Center at 1-866-236-3276.

A person may donate who has traveled to a non-risk area of a malarial risk country and is free of unexplained symptoms suggestive of malaria.

A person must wait twelve months after travel to a malarial risk area or Iraq.

A person must wait three years after the date of departure after having lived five years or more in any malaria risk country(ies) or in a non-risk area within a malarial risk country.

A person is permanently ineligible after the following travel:

- between 1/1/80 and 12/31/96, a total of 3 months or more in the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands, Gibraltar, Falkland Islands)
- between 1/1/80 and 12/31/90, a total of 6 months or more on or associated with a U.S. military base in Belgium, Netherlands (Holland) or Germany
- between 1/1/80 and 12/31/96, a total of 6 months or more on or associated with a U.S. military base in Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Italy or Greece
- a total of 5 years or more in Europe

**WEIGHT / HEIGHT:** Donors must weigh at least 110 pounds, with two exceptions.

- Double red cell donation: Height and weight criteria differ, depending on the equipment used. A person should call the local blood donation center for more information.
- Young donors: A person who is 18 years of age or younger and all student donors at high school blood drives must also meet additional height and weight requirements, per the following charts:

**MALE** donors must weigh 110 pounds or more, depending on their height in the following chart:

If you are	4'10"	4'11"	5' or taller
You must weigh at least	118	114	110

**FEMALE** donors must weigh 110 pounds or more, depending on their height in the following chart:

If you are	5'1"	5'2"	5'3"	5'4"	5'5"	5'6" or taller
You must weigh at least	133	129	124	120	115	110

Young females who are shorter than 5'1" may still be eligible to donate blood. Call the Donor and Client Support Center at 1-866-236-3276 to ask about eligibility.