

The Need for Blood

Every two seconds someone in the United States needs blood. Yet blood cannot be manufactured; it must be given by volunteer donors. Because blood has a limited shelf life, the community blood supply must constantly be replenished to meet patients' needs. Blood donors can make a life-saving contribution by giving blood. Those who cannot donate can help save lives by volunteering with the American Red Cross.

The Donation Process

- 1. Registration.** It is important to make an appointment to donate blood. When a donor arrives at a blood drive, he/she is asked to sign in and show identification. A driver's license or Red Cross donor card are accepted forms of identification. The donor will be provided with some information to read about blood donation.
- 2. Health History.** The donor will receive a mini-physical that includes vital signs and blood iron level checks. Then, the donor completes a health questionnaire to determine his/her eligibility and ensure blood safety.
- 3. Donation.** Staff cleanses an area on the donor's inner arm and insert a needle to draw blood. After five to seven minutes, about one pint will be collected and the donor's arm will be bandaged.
- 4. Refreshments.** The donor can relax with juice and snacks after giving blood. The entire blood donation process only takes about an hour.

Giving blood is safe, easy and less painful than one might imagine. Donors often feel a fulfilling sense of contribution and pride knowing they are part of a life-saving team.

Basic Eligibility Requirements

Donors must :

- weigh at least 110 pounds.
- be in general good health.
- be at least 17* years old (*age requirements vary by state; some donors may be required to have a signed American Red Cross parental consent form).
- not have donated whole blood in the last 56 days.
- carry acceptable forms of identification, which can be found on redcross.org

There is no upper-age limit for donating blood

Please visit our web site or speak with a Red Cross staff member for current eligibility information.

Tips for a Positive Donation Experience

- Eat a small healthy, low-fat meal prior to donation.
- Drink plenty of water or juice throughout the day.
- Bring a photo ID or Red Cross blood donor card.
- Wear a short-sleeve shirt or one that can be comfortably raised above the elbows.
- Avoid heavy lifting or exercise after donation.
- Feel free to ask questions, and please follow any additional instructions given.