

Why You Should Donate Blood

In order to assure that blood is available when someone needs it, healthy people are asked to donate blood regularly throughout the year. The Red Cross philosophy is an altruistic appeal to community responsibility based on the tradition of neighbor helping neighbor. The result is a practical approach to meeting community, state, and national blood needs through shared responsibility.

1. You will benefit from giving blood.

- Qualified staff will give you a mini-physical, complete with a check of blood pressure, pulse, and temperature, an estimate of hematocrit, and a medical history exam.
- You will have a chance to meet people who share your commitment to helping others.
- You will be treated to refreshments in a quiet environment where you can relax and reflect on your life-saving act.

2. Donating blood is easy.

- The whole blood donation process only takes about an hour; the actual donation procedure itself usually takes less than 10 minutes. (An automated procedure, such as platelet or double red cell donation, usually takes 1-2 hours.)
- The Red Cross offers blood drives at businesses, schools, churches, civic groups and communities so you can donate at your convenience.
- Nearly everyone feels a little wary about needles at first. However, most donors will tell you that there is only a slight initial pinch.
- Put your time into perspective: If you think of the precious time your blood donation will provide a critically ill or injured patient, you will wonder why you ever hesitated.

3. Giving blood is safe.

- A new, sterile needle is used for each donor and discarded.
- Our staff takes every precaution to ensure a safe environment for the donor and a safe blood supply for local hospitals.

4. You have plenty of blood to share.

- Your body constantly makes new blood. The average adult body holds 10 to 12 pints of blood, but a donation consists of about one pint. Your body will replace your blood volume within 24 hours and your red cells in a few weeks.
- You can donate whole blood every 56 days, double red cell units every 112 days or platelets up to 24 times a year. Even if you already gave this year, you may be eligible to give again.

5. Your blood is always needed.

- You will help ensure a constant and adequate blood supply for all those who may be in need. Your donation could help give a friend, a neighbor, or a member of your community another chance at life.
- Every blood type is needed all the time. Common blood types are needed by the many patients who can use those types, while rare blood types are often in short supply.
- Donations are usually in short supply during the summer months and winter holiday season.