

Your Life Saving Blood

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When you donate blood, you have the potential to save 3 lives. In fact, 3 teaspoons of blood can save a baby's life! There is a great need for blood donors. Approximately 36,000 units of red blood cells are needed *each day*, nearly 7,000 units of platelets and 10,000 units of plasma daily in the U.S. alone. Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood. Because blood may be needed at anytime, it must be collected regularly. Additionally, blood products cannot be stored indefinitely. In fact, red blood cells must be used within 35-42 days of the collection and platelets must be used within 5 days of collection.

How Your Blood Helps Save Lives

Examples of how your blood can help save the life of another person include:

- Children with severe anemia resulting from malaria or malnutrition often require blood transfusion in order to stay alive.
- A single car accident victim could require as many as 100 pints of blood.
- Eight units of platelets may be required daily by leukemia patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment.
- A single pint of blood can sustain a premature infant's life for two weeks.
- A patient undergoing heart surgery or post surgical complications may require a blood transfusion.
- Blood transfusions help patients with blood disorders like hemophilia survive.
- Plasma is critical to help burn patients survive.
- Blood transfusions help raise hemoglobin levels in patients with chronic ailments like kidney disease and cancer.

Four Benefits to the Blood Donor

1. Donating blood can balance iron levels in your blood. Too much iron in your blood is far more common than iron deficiency and can be worse. Studies have found that high levels of iron have led to an increased rate of heart attacks and negatively effect cardiovascular outcomes in people with high cholesterol.
2. Donating blood can increase blood flow. A high sugar diet, smoking, emotional stress, anxiety, high cholesterol, and high uric acid levels increase the thickness of your blood, thus increasing the risk of having a blood clot or stroke. In fact, Dr. Phillip DeChristopher, Director of the Loyola University of Health System Blood is quoted in *TIME* magazine stating, "What is clear is that blood donors seem to not be hospitalized so often and if they are, they have shorter lengths of stay...And they're less likely to get heart attacks, strokes, and cancers."

3. You get a mini-physical. Every blood donor gets a “mini-physical” prior to donation. Your blood pressure, pulse, and hemoglobin is checked. Additionally, your blood will be tested for 13 diseases like HIV, hepatitis B and C, Malaria, and the West Nile Virus.
4. A longer life. A study found that people who volunteer for altruistic reasons appear to live longer than those who volunteer for more self-centered reasons.

Facts about Blood Donation

- Blood donation is a safe process. A sterile needle is used only once for each donor and then discarded.
- Blood donation is a simple four-step process: registration, medical history and mini-physical, donation, and refreshments.
- The actual blood donation typically takes less than 10-12 minutes. The entire process, from the time you arrive to the time you leave, takes about an hour and 15 minutes.
- You can resume your normal activities after donating blood, though you are asked to refrain from exercise or heavy weight lifting for 12 hours after the donation.
- Donating blood will not leave you low on blood; in fact you will have surplus blood after the donation.
- You will not feel drained or tired if you continue to drink fluids and have a good meal. If possible, please have a good meal at least 3 hours before donating.

To schedule a blood donation with a local Red Cross please visit: www.redcrossblood.org.



<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2014/07/28/blood-donation-benefits.aspx>

<http://www.redcrossblood.org/learn-about-blood/blood-facts-and-statistics>

