



# What You Must Know to Give BLOOD



Canadian Blood Services  
*it's in you to give*

## BEFORE YOU GIVE

Before giving blood please read this brochure.

- Drinking fluids before donation will help to maintain your blood volume.
- We will ask you to show proof of identity and complete a form that asks you about your health.
- You will be asked if you have engaged in actions that may transmit HIV and hepatitis.
- We will check your blood pressure, pulse and temperature. We will check your blood to make sure you are not anemic.
- You will then be asked to sign a statement that confirms that you have read and understood the information in the brochure and that you have answered all questions truthfully.

Your presence here is voluntary. You may leave at any time but please inform a member of the clinic staff.

## DONOR PRIVACY

Whether you donate or not your answers are kept on file. We take appropriate measures to protect the confidentiality of your personal information. If you would like to obtain more information on our privacy program, please ask for our privacy brochure.

## INFORMATION ON AIDS

AIDS is caused by a virus known as HIV. HIV can be spread when body fluids such as semen, blood or vaginal fluids from a person with the virus enter the bloodstream of someone else. Because HIV can be transmitted by blood, your blood will be tested for HIV. The tests for HIV **cannot** detect 100% of HIV infections.

## HIV AND HEPATITIS VIRUS RISKS

The HIV and hepatitis viruses can be transmitted if:

- You have used a needle to inject illegal drugs into yourself
- You have taken money or drugs for sex, since 1977
- You are a male who has had sex with another male, since 1977
- You regularly receive blood products
- You have had sex with someone who has done any of the things listed above
- You have been in jail for longer than 48 hours in the past 12 months.

## DEFINITION OF SEX

Sex refers to any of the following activities even if a condom or barrier device was used:

- Vaginal intercourse (contact between penis and vagina)
- Oral sex (mouth or tongue on someone's vagina, penis or anus)
- Anal intercourse (contact between penis and anus).

## DO NOT GIVE BLOOD IF:

Do not give blood if:

- You have engaged in activities that put you at risk for getting HIV or hepatitis
- You have had a test that shows you have AIDS or the HIV virus
- You want a test for HIV.

## PREVENTING USE OF YOUR BLOOD

You may not want to say that you are at risk for getting HIV. For this reason, we provide a way you can make this known without telling any one. You will be asked to select a sticker in private from a choice of two. Choosing the "NO" sticker means your blood will not be used. The "YES" sticker means your blood will be used, if test results are okay. The stickers are bar-coded and read by a machine so your choice remains private.

## INFORMATION OF IMPORTANCE TO YOUR HEALTH

## ALLERGIES

Latex products and medical gloves are used at the donor clinic. Please tell the clinic staff if you are allergic to latex or to the powder used in medical gloves.

## WHILE YOU GIVE

Giving blood takes about 15 minutes. The needle used to take the blood is new and sterile.

## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

There is usually no discomfort while giving. A small number of donors may:

- Feel faint, dizzy or nauseated
- Feel tired for a day or two
- Very rarely, faint and have muscle spasms
- Have bruising, redness or a rash at the needle site
- Suffer nerve damage, pain or numbness in the arm.

A decrease in iron stores (ferritin) may occur in frequent donors. A diet rich in iron is advised for all donors.

## AFTER YOU GIVE

- Put pressure on the needle site for about five minutes to stop the bleeding. We will then place a bandage on your arm.
- Rest for five to ten minutes or so.
- If you feel faint sit down and rest for a few minutes with your head between your knees or lie down.
- To avoid a skin rash, when you return home, remove the bandage and wash the needle site with soap and water.
- Avoid doing anything strenuous for about 6 to 8 hours.
- Drink plenty of fluids to replace the fluid that has been lost.

## HAZARDOUS JOBS

People who work in jobs that expose them to risk (such as flight crews, scuba divers, bus drivers and heavy equipment operators) may require some time off before going back to work. For those who engage in risky sports, time off from the sport may be advised after giving blood.

## HOW OFTEN YOU CAN GIVE

A blood donor may give every 56 days.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR DONATION

Your donation is used to treat patients. A small part of your donation may be used for quality testing, teaching or stored for future testing but this is rare. As well, part of your donation may be donated or sold on a cost recovery basis instead of being discarded. It could then be used for research or further processed into drugs to treat patients inside or outside Canada. For further information please ask for our *What Happens to YOUR Donation* brochure.

Your blood will be tested for:

- Hepatitis B and C
- Syphilis
- AIDS virus (HIV)
- HTLV virus
- West Nile virus
- Blood group
- A Chagas disease test will be done if you have answered "yes" to any of the questions that identify a possible risk for acquiring Chagas disease. A Chagas disease test may also be done on a certain number of donors who answer "no" to these questions.
- Other tests, such as parvovirus B19, cytomegalovirus (also known as CMV) and bacteria may be done. This depends on the use of your blood.

There are unusual circumstances in which these tests cannot be done.

## POSITIVE TEST RESULTS

If any of these tests show results that could affect your health this is what happens:

- Your blood will not be used
- CBS staff will ask you for the name of your doctor and the results will be given to him or her
- Except for a positive West Nile virus test, your name will be added to a private list of those who cannot give blood
- If required by provincial law, the local or provincial health office will be informed of positive test results.

## CONTACT CBS IF:

- After leaving the blood donor clinic you faint, or get a large bruise
- After giving blood you decide your blood should not be used
- You suffer from any illness or diarrhea within the next week
- Within the next 14 days you have West Nile Virus
- You have a test within the next twelve months that shows you have hepatitis or HIV.

## QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or concerns please ask the clinic staff. Or call 1 888 2 DONATE (1 888 236-6283). More information may also be found at our website, [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca).