

**PLEASE READ THIS BROCHURE**

# What you must know to donate blood






Making donation safe for you, and for those who receive your donation

## General information






Your presence here is voluntary. You may leave at any time. If you do decide to leave, please inform one of our donor centre team members.

- Drinking fluids and eating salty snacks before and after your donation will help maintain your blood volume and improve your donation experience.
- Let us know if you are feeling dizzy or unwell at any time during your visit.
- Let us know if you are allergic to latex or the powder used in medical gloves.
- Whether or not you donate, your information may be kept on file.




## Before you donate...

-  Have something to eat in the hours before you donate. Avoid fatty foods such as bacon or fried foods.
-  You will complete a questionnaire.
-  Drink at least 500 ml of water and eat a salty snack just before donating.
-  We will confirm your identity.
-  We will check your:
  - hemoglobin with a finger stick test
  - temperature

## While you donate...

-  The needle used during your donation is sterile and will only be used once and then discarded.
-  We will collect about 500 ml of blood.
-  The collection process takes about 10 to 15 minutes.
-  We will ask you to do muscle tensing exercises while you donate and before getting up.
-  Please alert a member of our team if you are not feeling well during your donation.

## After you donate...

-  We will apply a pressure bandage on your arm.
-  You are encouraged to stay in the refreshment area for about 15 minutes to re-hydrate and have a snack.
-  If you feel faint, sit down and rest for a few minutes with your head between your knees or lie down.

## After you leave the donor centre...

- Continue to drink plenty of fluids such as water or juice (avoid alcoholic beverages) throughout the rest of your day.
- Leave the bandage on for at least 1 hour, then remove the bandage and wash the donation area with soap and water to prevent a rash.
  - If you are still bleeding after removing the bandage, re-apply the bandage, apply pressure for 5 minutes and remove the bandage after 4 hours.
- You should avoid strenuous activity for six to eight hours and heavy lifting for 24 hours after giving blood.
- If you feel faint and you are driving, pull over. Resume driving only when you have fully recovered or call for help.
- Jobs that expose you to risk (such as bus drivers and heavy equipment operators) may also require some time off.



Contact us at **1 888 2 DONATE (1.888.236.6283)** if:

- You forgot to tell us something related to your health, travel history or lifestyle.
- You decide your donation should not be used for any reason.
- You experience an adverse reaction (for more information see section on adverse reactions).
- You get sick or have diarrhea in the week after donating.
- In the next two weeks you are told by a healthcare provider that you have West Nile virus or Zika virus.
- In the next year, you are told by a healthcare provider that you have hepatitis or HIV.

**See reverse**

## Questions?

- Ask one of our team members.
- Visit [blood.ca](https://www.blood.ca).
- Call us at **1 888 2 DONATE (1.888.236.6283)**.

For more information on iron, visit [blood.ca](https://www.blood.ca).

For information about what happens to your donation, click on 'Donation process' under the **Blood for Life** tab on [blood.ca](https://www.blood.ca).

### Did you know?

You can create your donor account at [myaccount.blood.ca](https://myaccount.blood.ca), or use our free **GiveBlood app**, to manage your preferences and more.

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## Adverse reactions

### A small number of donors may:

- Feel tired for a day or two.
- Develop a bruise, redness or a rash at the needle site:
  - Apply ice on and off if there is swelling.
  - For discomfort, take acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol) for the first 24 hours. After 24 hours you may take acetaminophen, ASA (e.g. Aspirin) or other anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen (e.g. Advil or Motrin).
- Feel faint, dizzy and/or nauseated.
- Faint and/or have muscle spasms.
- Suffer nerve damage, arm pain or numbness:
  - Apply ice on and off if there is swelling.
  - For discomfort, take acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol) for the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, take ASA (e.g. Aspirin) or other anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen (e.g. Advil or Motrin).



Consult a healthcare provider if any of these symptoms persist or are concerning to you.

## Hemoglobin and iron

- Your red cells are rich in hemoglobin which contains iron.
- Because your donation contains red cells, you will lose some iron.
- Those most at risk of developing iron deficiency due to blood donation are:
  - Young donors 17 to 25 years old.
  - Menstruating females.
  - Frequent blood donors (twice a year for women and three times a year for men).
- Iron deficiency due to blood donation can be prevented.
- Replenish the iron lost in donation with a daily iron pill taken for two months.
- Check with your healthcare provider before starting iron supplementation as it may be harmful in some individuals or mask an underlying medical condition.



A diet rich in iron is advised for all donors but may not be enough to replenish the iron lost from your blood donation.



Ask your healthcare provider about the need to check your iron stores (ferritin test).

- If untreated, iron deficiency can lead to anemia (low hemoglobin).
- Symptoms of anemia include fatigue and reduced exercise tolerance.

## HIV and hepatitis

- Sexual contact<sup>1</sup> or the sharing of needles or syringes can contribute to the spread of HIV and hepatitis.
- Because the tests for HIV and hepatitis cannot detect all infections, you will be asked about certain risk activities.

You will be asked if you have had a new sexual partner in the last 3 months.

A new sexual partner means the following:

- Someone with whom you have not had sex before.  
or
- Someone with whom you had a past sexual relationship that ended, and with whom you have started having sex again in the last 3 months.

<sup>1</sup>Sexual contact means the following, even if a condom or barrier device was used:

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

## Testing your blood

- We test your blood group (ABO and Rh) on every donation.
- Your blood will also be tested for the following infectious diseases as they are known to spread to others through blood.

### Tested with every donation:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Hepatitis B virus*                  | 4. Syphilis*                               |
| 2. Hepatitis C virus*                  | 5. Human T-cell lymphotropic virus (HTLV)* |
| 3. Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)* |  |

### Tested as required:

- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Chagas disease*       | 5. Bacteria          |
| 2. West Nile virus*      | 6. Hepatitis E virus |
| 3. Parvovirus B19        | 7. Hepatitis A virus |
| 4. Cytomegalovirus (CMV) |                      |

- Other tests may be done on some donations. These include testing for other blood groups, including human leukocyte antigens (HLA), screening for uncommon hemoglobins if your blood is used for patients with specific needs, and ferritin (iron stores).
- You will be informed of unusual results from any of the tests.

### \*If the test result is abnormal:

- You will be notified of your test results and eligibility to donate.
- Your blood will not be used.
- If your test results are confirmed positive, you will no longer be eligible to donate (with the exception of West Nile Virus).