Spring brings change to blood donor eligibility

*Donors who have recently had a tattoo or piercing now only have to wait three months before donating blood, which is half the time it used to be.*

This spring a variety of changes to Canadian Blood Services’ blood donor criteria and screening questionnaire will come into effect across the country. These latest changes are the result of a successful submission to Health Canada to remove and alter blood donor screening criteria based on current scientific evidence. Among other things, these changes reflect the latest infectious disease data, align with international standards, and modernize the language we use in screening.

Changes like these may allow more Canadians the opportunity to donate.

Some highlights include:

- removal of the HIV deferral for people who have travelled to Cameroon and Togo;
- shortening of the deferral time for people who have had tattoos and piercings from 6 months to 3 months;
- updating the language around restrictions for marijuana use; and
- reducing the waiting period for donors who may have received blood and blood products.

Introducing a wide range of changes to our donor screening may allow thousands more people to be eligible to donate blood each year. Continually reviewing and refining our screening criteria and eligibility requirements is key to meeting our goal of being as inclusive as possible while ensuring the highest level of safety possible.

Learn more about blood donor eligibility on [blood.ca](http://blood.ca).

To read more articles, please visit the BloodNotes section of blood.ca.