

## DONATE AND SAVE LIVES FOR NATIONAL BLOOD DONOR MONTH

January has been recognized as National Blood Donor Month for over forty years. According to the American Red Cross, every two seconds, someone in the United States (U.S.) needs blood. Because it cannot be artificially made, lifesaving blood must come from generous volunteers. One blood donation can save up to three lives! Fewer people donate during the winter season due to holiday schedules, travels, illness, and bad weather. This results in lower blood supplies available for those in crisis. This January we hope to raise awareness and encourage healthy volunteers to donate.

### **Facts from the American Red Cross**

- More than 41,000 blood donations are needed each day for surgeries, organ transplants, cancer patients, emergency facilities, and accident victims
- One in seven people who enter the hospital will need a blood transfusion
- Adults have about 10 pints of blood in their body
- Only one pint is given during a donation
- An estimated 38% of the U.S. population is eligible to give blood, but less than 10% actually do

### **Donor Requirements**

To ensure the safety of donors and recipients, potential donors are evaluated before they can give blood. This may include health history, body temperature, pulse, blood pressure, hemoglobin, or hematocrit. Other considerations include travel outside the U.S., medical conditions or treatments, medications, and certain lifestyle habits. Basic requirements typically include donors to:

- ✓ Be in good health (if you have a chronic condition such as diabetes, it must be treated and controlled)
- ✓ Feel well and with no active cold or flu symptoms
- ✓ Be at least 17 years old (some states allow 16 years of age with parental permission)
- ✓ Weigh at least 110 lbs.

### **Types of Donations**

Because blood has several components, donations can be given as whole blood, or just the blood components. Blood is made up of red blood cells (RBCs), white blood cells (WBCs), platelets, and a liquid substance called plasma. Whole blood is the most common type of donation, but giving just platelets or plasma are other options. Platelets

and plasma can be given more frequently than whole blood.

### **Donation Frequency**

It takes time for the body to regenerate the removed blood and blood components after donation. Blood donors must wait in between donations to maintain their health and wellbeing. Listed below are the typical frequencies allowed for each donation type. Some blood banks or centers may require even longer recovery durations between donations.

Component	Frequency
Whole blood	Every 56 days
Platelets	Every 7 days, up to 24 times per year
Plasma	Every 28 days, up to 13 times per year
Double red cells	Every 112 days, up to 3 times per year

### **Blood Types**

Everyone has a blood type. Blood type is passed down from your parents and is based on the presence or absence of substances on the surface of red blood cells. The most common substances used to indicate blood type is A, B, O, and Rh factor. These factors will determine a person can and cannot receive blood from. In order for a safe transfusion to take place, the donor and recipient must have compatible blood types. See below for which A, B, and O blood types can be matched together.

	DONOR	RECIPIENT
Type O is the universal donor and can donate RBCs to anyone.	O	O
Type A can donate RBCs to type A and AB.	A	A
Type B can donate RBCs to type B and AB.	B	B
Type AB can only donate to type AB, but is the universal recipient and can receive blood from anyone.	AB	AB

### **Additional Resources**

For more information on blood donations or where your local blood drives are being held, you can visit the following resources:

American Red Cross	<a href="http://www.redcrossblood.org/">http://www.redcrossblood.org/</a>
America's Blood Centers	<a href="http://www.americasblood.org/">http://www.americasblood.org/</a>
Blood Source	<a href="https://www.bloodsource.org/">https://www.bloodsource.org/</a>

**The demand for blood donations is constant. Every contribution makes a difference. Start donating now for a life in need.**

For informational purposes only; not meant to supersede the advice of a physician.  
If you have questions regarding this information, please consult your medical professional.