

# About Blood Donations

**There is no substitute for human blood. One in three people will need blood sometime during their lives. Blood lasts only 42 days. Your donation now is critically important.**

## What does it take to be a blood donor?

Blood donors must be at least 16 years old, weigh at least 110 pounds, and not have donated blood within the last 56 days. Sixteen year olds must present a signed parental permission form. Visit [www.savealifenow.org/16](http://www.savealifenow.org/16) to obtain the form. There is no upper age limit for blood donations.

For questions regarding medical eligibility to donate blood, please call us at **1-800-688-0900**.

Before coming to donate, please be sure to eat at your regular mealtimes and drink plenty of fluids. Also, when you come to donate, bring a form of identification with your signature or photo.

## When I give blood, what will happen first?

You will be asked to provide some basic information such as your name, address, phone numbers and date of birth. You will then answer questions about your health history to ensure that you are eligible to donate blood. Your medical history will be taken and your hemoglobin will be determined from a drop of blood. Your blood pressure, pulse and temperature will also be checked.

## How long does the donation take?

The procedure is done by a skilled, specially trained technician and takes 10 to 12 minutes. You will give one pint of whole blood. The materials used for your donation, including the needle, are

new, sterile, disposable, and used only once by you for your blood donation. You will rest after the donation and be served refreshments. Plan to spend about an hour at the blood drive.

## How will I feel after my donation?

After relaxing and having a snack in the recovery area, most people feel fine. After donating, drink extra fluids for the next 48 hours.

Your body replaces blood volume or plasma within 24 hours. Red cells need about four to eight weeks for complete replacement. The average healthy body has between 8 and 12 pints of blood and can easily spare one.

## How soon after donating can I get back to my routine?

After you give blood, you will relax and have a snack. You can then resume normal activity as long as you feel well. Just avoid lifting, pushing heavy objects or engaging in strenuous exercise for at least 4 or 5 hours after giving blood.

## What happens to my blood after donating?

After donation, your blood will be tested for blood type, hepatitis, HIV (AIDS virus), HTLV (a virus that may cause blood or nerve disease), Chagas, West Nile virus and syphilis. It is then separated into components, such as red cells, plasma and platelets that can help several patients.

## How do I schedule an appointment to donate blood?

Visit [www.savealifenow.org/blood](http://www.savealifenow.org/blood) or call us at **1-877-468-6844**.