

Blood Donor Educational Materials:

MAKING YOUR BLOOD DONATION SAFE

READ THIS BEFORE YOU DONATE!



We know that you would not donate unless you think your blood is safe. However, in order for us to assess all risks that may affect you or a patient receiving a transfusion, it is essential that you answer each question completely and accurately. If you don't understand a question, ask the blood center staff. All information you provide is confidential.

To determine if you are eligible to donate we will:

- Ask about your health and travel
- Ask about medicines you are taking or have taken
- Ask about your risk for infections that can be transmitted by blood – especially AIDS and viral hepatitis
- Take your blood pressure, temperature and pulse
- Take a blood sample to be sure your blood count is acceptable

If you are eligible to donate we will:

- Clean your arm with an antiseptic. Tell us if you have any skin allergies
- Use a new, sterile, disposable needle to collect your blood

DONOR ELIGIBILITY – SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Certain diseases, such as AIDS and hepatitis, can be spread through sexual contact and enter your bloodstream. We will ask specific questions about sexual contact.

What do we mean by “sexual contact?”

The words “have sexual contact with” and “sex” are used in some of the questions we will ask you, and apply to any of the activities below, whether or not a condom or other protection was used:

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

HIV/AIDS risk behaviors

HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. It is spread mainly by sexual contact with an infected person OR by sharing needles or syringes used by an infected person for injecting drugs.

Do not donate if you:

- Have AIDS or have ever had a positive HIV test
- Have EVER used needles to take any drugs not prescribed by your doctor
- Are a male who has had sexual contact with another male IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS
- Have EVER taken money, drugs or other payment for sex
- Have had sexual contact in IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS with anyone described above

- Have had syphilis or gonorrhea IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS
- Have been in juvenile detention, lockup, jail or prison for more than 72 consecutive hours IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS
- Have a history of Ebola virus infection or disease

Your blood can transmit infections, including HIV/AIDS, even if you feel well and all your tests are normal. This is because even the best tests cannot detect the virus for a period of time after you are infected.

DO NOT donate to get a test! If you think you may be at risk for HIV/AIDS or any other infection, do not donate simply to get a test. Ask us where you can be tested outside the blood center.

The following symptoms can be present before an HIV test turns positive:

- Fever
- Enlarged lymph glands
- Sore throat
- Rash

DO NOT donate if you have these symptoms!

Travel to or birth in other countries

Blood donor tests may not be available for some infections that are found only in certain countries. If you were born in, have lived in, or visited certain countries, you may not be eligible to donate for some period of time, which may vary from one month to indefinitely.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOUR DONATION

To protect patients, your blood is tested for several types of hepatitis, HIV, syphilis, and other infections. If your blood tests positive it will not be given to a patient. There are times when your blood is not tested. If this occurs, you may not receive any notification. You will be notified about any positive test result which may disqualify you from donating in the future. The blood center will not release your test results without your written permission unless required by law (e.g., to the Health Department).

Frequent Donors: Recent scientific studies have shown that frequent blood donations reduce the amount of iron stored in the body. If you donate red blood cells two or more times per year, please consider taking an over-the-counter iron supplement.

THANK YOU FOR DONATING BLOOD TODAY!

Metro Area:

Memorial Blood Centers
737 Pelham Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55114
(651) 332-7000

Northland:

Memorial Blood Centers
5115 Burning Tree Rd.
Duluth, MN 55811
(218) 723-8080