What You Must Know to Give Blood

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

Before you give

Have something to eat in the hours before donation (Avoid fatty foods such as bacon or fried foods).

Drink at least 500 ml of water or juice just before donation.

General Information

Your presence here is voluntary. You may leave at any time but please inform a member of the clinic staff.

• Drinking fluids and eating salty snacks before and after 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 give...

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After you receive...

Rest and put pressure on the needle site for about five minutes. We will then place a bandage on your arm.

You are encouraged to stay in the refreshment area for five minutes or so 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 give...

The needle used to take the blood is new and sterile.

We will collect about 450 ml of blood.

The blood collection usually takes about 10 to 15 minutes.

Let us know immediately if you feel unwell during the donation.

While you give...

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After you leave the clinic...

• For the rest of the day, drink plenty of fluids such as water or juice (avoid alcoholic beverages).
• When you get home, remove the bandage and wash the donation area with soap and water to prevent a skin rash.
• 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 only when 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 blood 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 health care provider that you have West Nile virus or Zika virus.
• In the next year, you are told by a health care provider that you have hepatitis or HIV.

Rest and put pressure on the needle site for about five minutes. We will then place a bandage on your arm.

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A small number of donors may:

- Feel tired for a day or two.
- Get a bruise, redness or a rash at the needle site:
- Young donors 17 to 25 years old.
- Menstruating females.
- Frequent blood donors (twice a year for women and three times a year for men).

Your red cells are rich in hemoglobin which contains iron.

Because your blood donation contains red cells, you will lose some iron.

There are a few possible adverse reactions during or after the donation.

If untreated, iron deficiency can lead to anemia (low hemoglobin)

Iron deficiency due to blood donation can be prevented

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 health care provider about the need to check your iron stores (ferritin test).

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