Quick Facts on Canadian Blood Services and donating blood.

Now that your organization has joined the Partners for Life program, we’re sure that your employees/members will have many questions about donating blood. Here’s a quick reference sheet that you can use to start educating your colleagues.

What is Canadian Blood Services?

- Canadian Blood Services is a national, not-for-profit charitable organization that manages the supply of blood and blood products in all provinces and territories outside of Quebec. Responsibilities include supplying blood and blood products to all Canadians, maintaining safe and secure methods for collecting and storing blood and distributing blood to all provinces (except Quebec).
- Also oversees the country’s OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Network

The Need for Blood.

Some factors that have caused the demand for blood and new blood donors to increase include:

- Aging population
- More aggressive medical treatments and sophisticated surgeries
- Shrinking donor base
- Increasing population

What does it take to donate blood?

Donors are able to give whole blood (red blood cells, plasma and platelets), or plasma separately, or platelets separately. Here are some quick facts on donating whole blood:

- The donation process (including screening) only takes about one hour.
- Your body automatically replaces all the blood you donate: your plasma is replaced within hours, platelets within days and red blood cells in about 56 days. You can donate blood every 56 days or approximately every two months.
- Blood donors can give as often as every 56 days.
**The Most Common Questions About Blood Donation:**

**What will happen first?**

When you arrive at a clinic, you will be asked to provide some basic information and provide valid photo identification.

**How long does the donation take?**

The actual donation procedure is done by skilled, specially trained clinic staff and takes 5 to 10 minutes. You will rest after donation, and enjoy refreshments. Plan to spend about an hour at the donor clinic.

**How will I feel after the donation?**

Most people feel great! Donors who know what to expect and have eaten regular meals and are well hydrated before donating are usually fine. They can return to normal activities such as work and school. However, donors are recommended to avoid strenuous exercise for six to eight hours following their donation. Also remember to drink extra fluids for the next 24 hours.

**What happens to my blood after the donation?**

For information, review or share a copy of the “Where does my blood go?” brochure.

**Who can give blood – what are the donation criteria, and what determines eligibility?**

In all cases, the donor must be in good health, weigh at least 110 pounds, and be feeling well on the day of their donation. Donors are encouraged to drink water and eat something prior to the donation. For information on full donation requirements, direct those interested to www.blood.ca or have them call 1 888 2 DONATE (1-888-236-6283) to speak with a registered nurse about their eligibility. However, final eligibility determination rests with the screening nurse at the clinic where a person donates blood.

Very specific criteria must be met before a person can become a blood donor. There are some medical conditions that can temporarily or even indefinitely defer a blood donation. Some of these are listed in the “Who can give blood?” brochure and more information is available at www.blood.ca or by consulting a nurse at 1 888 2 DONATE (1-888-236-6283).

All donors will be evaluated during a health interview at the donor clinic. You may be able to save your donors time and help the donor clinic run more smoothly by encouraging them to read and follow the guidelines in the brochures we provide.
How can I help promote blood donation?

The best way to promote the need for blood and blood donors is one-on-one. By visiting each of your colleagues or members personally, you can explain the need for blood and the importance of donating. If your organization is too large to address each member individually, Canadian Blood Services can provide you with an email template, advertisements, posters, brochures and much more to help you get the word out.

Please reference the promotional order form within this package to see which materials are at your disposal and don’t hesitate to ask your Canadian Blood Services contact for additional materials — or to suggest something new to add to the list if you think it might work well.

In large organizations, ideally you can ask others to help you out and focus on specific groups or areas. Divide and conquer could be the best approach — challenge groups and departments to see who can sign up more colleagues and members to make blood donations!

Note: For any further information on the issues discussed, please visit www.blood.ca or call 1 888 2 DONATE (1-888-236-6283).