

Complete Blood Donation Guide

Your comprehensive guide to safe and successful blood donation

What is Blood Donation?

Blood donation is the process of voluntarily giving blood that can be used for transfusions or made into medications. Each donation can save up to three lives.

Blood Types and Compatibility

| Blood Type | Can Donate To | Can Receive From | Population % |
|------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| O- | All blood types | O- | 7% |
| O+ | O+, A+, B+, AB+ | O-, O+ | 37% |
| A- | A-, A+, AB-, AB+ | A-, O- | 6% |
| A+ | A+, AB+ | A-, A+, O-, O+ | 36% |
| B- | B-, B+, AB-, AB+ | B-, O- | 2% |
| B+ | B+, AB+ | B-, B+, O-, O+ | 9% |
| AB- | AB-, AB+ | A-, B-, AB-, O- | 1% |
| AB+ | AB+ | All blood types | 3% |

Eligibility Criteria

Basic Requirements:

- Age: 18-65 years old (17 with parental consent)
- Weight: Minimum 50 kg (110 lbs)
- Health: In good health and feeling well
- Frequency: At least 90 days since last donation

Temporary Deferrals:

- Recent tattoo or piercing (3-12 month waiting period)
- Recent surgery (waiting period varies)
- Pregnancy or recent childbirth (6 months postpartum)
- Low hemoglobin levels
- Recent travel to certain countries
- Recent illness or infection

The Donation Process

Before Donation:

- Eat a healthy meal 2-3 hours before
- Drink at least 16 oz of water
- Get 7-8 hours of sleep
- Bring valid photo ID
- Wear comfortable clothing with sleeves that roll up

During Donation:

- **Registration (5-10 min):** Complete forms and verify identity
- **Health Screening (10-15 min):** Check vitals and hemoglobin
- **Blood Collection (8-10 min):** Donate approximately 1 pint (450ml)
- **Recovery (10-15 min):** Rest and have refreshments

After Donation:

- Drink extra fluids for 24 hours
- Keep bandage on for 4-5 hours
- Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours
- Eat iron-rich foods to replenish

Health Benefits of Donating Blood

- Free health screening and blood tests
- Reduces risk of heart disease
- Helps maintain healthy iron levels
- Burns approximately 650 calories per donation
- Psychological benefits of helping others

Recovery Timeline

- **24 hours:** Plasma volume fully restored
- **2 weeks:** Red blood cells begin replenishing
- **4-8 weeks:** Full red blood cell recovery
- **90 days:** Ready to donate again

Important: Always consult with donation center staff if you have specific questions about your eligibility. They can provide personalized guidance based on your individual health situation.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is blood donation safe?

Yes! All equipment is sterile and single-use. You cannot contract diseases by donating blood.

Q: Does it hurt?

You may feel a slight pinch when the needle is inserted, but most donors report minimal discomfort.

Q: How much blood is taken?

Approximately 1 pint (450ml), which is about 10% of your total blood volume.

Q: Will I feel weak afterward?

Most donors feel fine. Some may experience slight fatigue, which is temporary.

BloodMitra - Blood Donor Network

For more information, visit our website or contact your local donation center

Generated on February 02, 2026