

Why Blood Donation is So Critical

Why do people donate?

Everyone has their own reasons for donating blood, but a few common ones include:

- Donating is a generous thing to do. It helps people in need, and it helps people in your community. When you give, others live.
- Donors, especially those who donate regularly, keep our nation's blood supply stable. Although many people donate blood after disasters, blood is needed every day of the year.
- There is no substitute for blood. Donors provide the only supply of life-saving blood for those in need.
- Donating is simple, fast, and convenient. The donation process can take as little as 45 minutes of your time, but can make a lifelong difference for someone else.

How is my blood used?

If you donate blood, it will be given to someone who needs it through a transfusion. Transfusions help replace blood that is lost due to surgery or injury. Transfusions also help people with disorders that prevent them from making blood correctly. Blood transfusions are one of the most common procedures in U.S. hospitals.

There are different kinds of blood donation. Each one is used for a variety of life-saving procedures and treatments.

- Red blood cells are given to people who have blood disorders, such as sickle cell disease or chronic anemia caused by kidney failure or

bleeding in the stomach. They are also given to people who have acute blood loss from trauma. Sometimes babies born very early need a transfusion to increase the number of red blood cells in their bodies.

- Platelets are most often used to treat cancer. They are also given to patients who have open-heart surgery and organ transplants.
- Plasma transfusions are used for patients with liver failure, bad infections, and serious burns.
- "Whole blood" is usually given to people who have life-threatening injuries or people in surgery.



Find a donation center near you and make an appointment to save a life today. Visit hhs.gov/giveblood/locator.

“

One of the times I needed a blood transfusion, it was really scary since the supply was low and it took a few days to get it.”

—Von