

Frequently Asked Questions

For more help, call customer support at [1.888.9.DONATE \(936.6283\)](tel:1.888.9.DONATE). Below is a list of commonly asked questions about donating blood at OneBlood. Choose from one of the topics below.

Blood Donation FAQs

Can I Donate?

To donate blood, you must be in good health, 16 years of age (16-year-olds need a completed and signed [Parental Consent Form](#)) or older, and weigh a minimum of 110 pounds.

Does donating blood hurt?

You may feel a slight sting or a very minor pinch when the needle is first inserted. It is no different than the feeling you experience when having routine blood work performed.

How much blood is taken during a donation?

A whole blood donation is typically one pint of blood.

How long does the actual donation process take?

Whole blood donation takes about 10 – 15 minutes. Automated procedures can take anywhere from 45 minutes to 90 minutes.

Is there anything I should do before I donate?

- Drink plenty of water prior to donating.
- Eat a light healthy meal. Avoid fatty foods. Donating on an empty stomach is not recommended.
- Eat iron rich foods a few days leading up to your donation. Your iron levels must be at a certain level in order to donate. We will check your iron count prior to your donation and if it is too low you will not be able to donate that day.

If I was deferred in the past from donating, am I able to donate in the future?

It depends on the reason you were deferred. Some deferrals are temporary and others are permanent. For example, if a donor's iron count is too low they would be temporarily deferred until they are able to get their iron levels into the necessary range by eating iron rich foods.

What should I bring when I donate?

- On donation day, wear comfortable clothing, preferably with a short-sleeve shirt. Bring **your ID** and a **list of any medications** you are taking. If you are 16, you'll need a signed [parental consent form](#).

Is there anything I should do after donating?

- Drink plenty of water
- Avoid alcohol for 24 hours
- Avoid lifting heavy items and rigorous exercise for the remainder of the day

Can I contract a disease from donating blood?

No. There is no risk of contracting a disease through the donation process. Each collection kit is sterile, pre-packaged and only used once.

Can I donate if I have high blood pressure?

Yes, however your blood pressure at the time of donation must be below 180 systolic (first number) and below 100 diastolic (second number) at the time of donation. Taking medication to control high blood pressure does **not** prevent you from donating blood.

What does the term “deferred donor” mean?

The blood center is heavily regulated and mandated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). As such, each donor must meet certain eligibility requirements in order to donate blood. If a donor does not meet one or more of the eligibility requirements they would be deferred from donating that day.

Can I donate if I am taking aspirin or medication?

If you are taking aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen or other NSAIDS, you can donate whole blood. However, you would **not** be eligible to donate platelets if you have taken any of these medications within 48 hours of your donation.

Can I donate if I am taking medication?

Most medications do not disqualify you from donating blood however the condition you are being treated for may result in you being deferred from donating. See below for a general list of medications that could impact your ability to donate.

What is my donated blood tested for?

After donating a sample of your blood will be sent to our state-of-the-art testing facility.

Your blood type will be determined and multiple tests will be performed to ensure your blood is safe for transfusion. Tests performed include:

- Red blood cell antibody screen
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- HIV 1/2
- HTLV I/II
- Syphilis
- Cholesterol
- West Nile Virus
- T. Cruzi (Chagas)

Certain donations may also be tested for:

- CMV (Cytomegalovirus)
- HLA antibody screen