



## Information and Instructions for your Blood Donation

Thank you for joining our mission to transform lives. This information explains how you can help us make the donation process safe for you and ensure an ample and safe blood supply is available for patients.

### Read this before you donate

We know that you would not donate unless you think your blood is safe. However, in order for us to assess all risks that may affect you or a patient receiving a transfusion, it is essential that you answer each question completely and accurately. If you don't understand a question, ask the blood center staff. All information you provide is confidential.

#### ***To determine if you are eligible to donate we will:***

- Ask about your health and travel
- Ask about medicines you are taking or have taken
- Ask about your risk for infections that can be transmitted by blood – especially AIDS and viral hepatitis
- Take your blood pressure, temperature and pulse
- Take a blood sample to be sure your blood count is acceptable

#### ***If you are eligible to donate we will:***

- Clean your arm with an antiseptic. *(Tell us if you have any skin allergies.)*
- Use a new, sterile, disposable needle to collect your blood

### **DONOR ELIGIBILITY – SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

Certain diseases, such as AIDS and hepatitis, can be spread through sexual contact and enter your bloodstream. We will ask specific questions about sexual contact.

#### ***What do we mean by “sexual contact”?***

The words “have sexual contact with” and “sex” are used in some of the questions we will ask you, and apply to any of the activities below, whether or not a condom or other protection was used:

- Vaginal sex (contact between penis and vagina)
- Oral sex (mouth or tongue on someone's vagina, penis or anus)
- Anal sex (contact between penis and anus)

#### ***HIV/AIDS risk behaviors***

HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. It is spread mainly by sexual contact with an infected person OR by sharing needles or syringes used by an infected person for injecting drugs.

#### ***Do not donate if you:***

- Have AIDS or have ever had a positive HIV test
- Have EVER used needles to take any drugs not prescribed by your doctor
- Are a male who has had sexual contact with another male, **IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS**
- Have EVER taken money, drugs, or other payment for sex
- Have had sexual contact **IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS** with anyone described above
- Have had syphilis or gonorrhea **IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS**
- Have been in juvenile detention, lockup, jail, or prison for more than 72 consecutive hours **IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS**

Your blood can transmit infections, including HIV/AIDS, even if you feel well and all your tests are normal. This is because even the best tests cannot detect the virus for a period of time after you are infected.



**Do not donate to get a test!** If you think you may be at risk for HIV/AIDS or any other infection, do not donate simply to get a test. Ask us where you can be tested outside the blood center.

The following symptoms can be present before an HIV test turns positive:

- Fever
- Enlarged lymph glands
- Sore throat
- Rash

**Do not donate if you have these symptoms!**

#### **Travel to or birth in other countries**

Blood donor tests may not be available for some infections that are found only in certain countries. If you were born in, have lived in or visited certain countries, you may not be eligible to donate.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOUR DONATION**

To protect patients, your blood is tested for several types of hepatitis, HIV, syphilis and other infections. If your blood tests positive it will not be given to a patient. There are times when your blood is not tested. If this occurs, you may not receive any notification. You will be notified about any positive test result which may disqualify you from donating in the future. The blood center will not release your test results without your written permission unless required by law (e.g. to the health department).

#### **Do not donate blood if you:**

- Have **EVER** had Ebola virus disease or infection

#### **IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED**

Before you donate, we will ask you to show ID containing your name and one of the following: date of birth, donor ID number or your photo.

#### **BLOOD DONATION: THE PROCESS**

You know that donating blood transforms lives. While there may be no direct benefit to you, your blood donation is essential to support patients in the community. Whole blood donation is the most common. But did you know that apheresis donations can make an extra impact?

#### **Whole Blood Donation**

During whole blood donation our specially trained staff will carefully insert a new, sterile, disposable needle into a vein on the inside of your elbow. The actual donation takes about 10 minutes. Once collected, your blood is tested, separated into components (red blood cells, plasma or platelets) and prepared for patient use.

#### **Apheresis Donation**

An apheresis donation allows our staff to collect only specific blood components, often in greater quantities. During this automated process, and using special equipment, your blood is collected and separated into the needed components. The remaining components are safely returned to you.

During apheresis, a small amount of anticoagulant (citrate) is added to the blood to prevent clotting. You may also receive saline solution to help replace fluids. Apheresis takes about 30 minutes to 2 hours depending on the component(s) collected.

Whether you decide to donate whole blood or give an apheresis donation, we will keep track of your accumulated red blood cell and plasma losses over time to be sure you aren't depleting your body of essential components and to determine how frequently you can safely donate.

## **YOUR SAFETY**

- You cannot contract any infectious diseases by donating blood. All equipment used in the donation process is sterile and used only once.
- Before you donate, we will give you important information to help you prevent or minimize the risk of any reactions.
- Although whole blood and apheresis donations are generally well tolerated by most donors, the following may occur: bruising or tenderness at the needle insertion site, lightheadedness, palpitations, nausea, fatigue, decreased exercise capacity, allergic reactions, fainting and possible injury with falls. Although very rare, blood donation could also result in an infection at the needle insertion site, nerve or blood vessel injury or a blood clot. Because some of these reactions occur slightly more frequently in young donors, we ask that they closely follow our pre- and post-donation instructions to reduce the risk.
- Additionally, apheresis donors may experience a vibrating sensation and chills. The use of citrate anticoagulant can also result in a metallic taste, tingling around the mouth or lips, or muscle cramps. Rarely, equipment malfunction may result in blood loss, red blood cell damage or a small amount of air in the blood circulation.
- Apheresis procedures have not been associated with adverse effects on bone minerals and lymphocyte counts (lymphocytes are a type of white blood cell), although the long-term effects of frequent donations remain unknown.
- Most reactions occur during or soon after donation, so it is important to follow instructions for hydrating and resting in the refreshment area. We recommend you remain in the donation center for at least 15 minutes after your donation. If donating blood in California, this is required by state law.
- We recommend you wait at least 12 hours before operating heavy machinery or driving commercial vehicles. You should wait 24 hours before engaging in strenuous exercise (including heavy lifting or intensive arm exercise).

## **IRON STORES AND BLOOD DONATION**

Red blood cells carry oxygen throughout the body on hemoglobin, an iron-containing protein. We measure your hemoglobin level before every donation to ensure you can safely donate since the iron lost at donation could eventually lower hemoglobin. Frequent donors (men who donate 3 or more times a year; women, 2 or more times) and teenage donors are at risk for low iron stores. We recommend these donors take a multivitamin with iron or an iron supplement to replace the iron lost during blood donation. If you are a frequent or teenage donor and choose to take iron supplements, you should discuss options with your doctor or pharmacist. A dose of elemental iron of 18 to 28 mg taken daily for 60 days soon after donating whole blood, or after every fifth apheresis donation, is sufficient to replace the iron lost during donation. Lower doses of iron, like those available in multivitamins, help avoid side effects. Higher doses will not increase iron absorption, may result in side effects and could delay diagnosis of blood loss from gastric ulcers or colon cancer.

## **COMPREHENSIVE BLOOD TESTING**

- Before your blood is transfused to a patient, it will be tested for ABO blood type and Rh factor, unexpected antibodies to red blood cells, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV-1/HIV-2, HTLV, syphilis, Zika and West Nile viruses.
- Additional tests may be performed to ensure donor or recipient safety, including but not limited to: cytomegalovirus, cholesterol, T. cruzi, IgA, HLA antibodies, bacteria, special blood group antigens, ferritin or sickle hemoglobin. Research or investigational tests may also be performed. DNA technology may be used for some tests, but whole genome testing is not performed.



## **NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS**

- You will be notified of any tests that result in your deferral from community blood donation and you will be told how long you will be deferred. Your name and other identifying information will be placed in a confidential deferred-donor directory.
- If you are under 18, your positive or inconclusive test results will be shared with you and your parents or guardians. If you are 16 or 17 years old and donate in California, your test results will only be shared with your parents or guardians with your permission.
- If required by law, positive test results will be reported to state and federal agencies, including the state health department.
- Anyone who tests positive for HIV will be provided with counseling and physician referral information.
- In order to interpret or better understand test results, we may contact you later for an additional blood sample.
- Because of their high sensitivity, screening tests may occasionally produce a false-positive result. Donors are notified of false-positive and/or indeterminate results that may affect donor eligibility even in the absence of disease.

## **INFORMED CONSENT**

- Before you give blood, you will be asked to sign a statement acknowledging you have read and understand the information provided to you, and your questions were answered.
- If you give an apheresis donation, we will ask you to complete an additional informed consent that provides further details about this specific donation type.
- If you have any questions, please ask our staff during your interview. You may choose not to have your blood collected and leave at any time.

## **PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Please be completely honest in responding to the questions about your health and medical history. Any information you provide on the donor record that may disqualify you before you donate is confidential.
- Your donor record is subject to inspection by government and blood bank regulatory agencies.
- We protect the confidentiality of all personal registration information, medical information and testing results obtained during your blood collection. This information will be used for blood center operations, including blood product manufacturing and research, and will not be disclosed unless permitted by law (including but not limited to test result notifications and regulatory compliance).
- By providing your telephone number (including cell phone number) and contact information, you expressly consent to contact by Vitalant or its representatives concerning future blood donations, follow-up questions or any other legitimate purpose, including communications via email, autodialer, pre-recorded messages and/or auto-text messaging.
- To educate the public and promote blood donation, we may post photos of donors on our social media sites.

To view this document and other pre-donation information, please visit [vitalant.org/Donate/Donor-Eligibility](http://vitalant.org/Donate/Donor-Eligibility).

Thank you for transforming patients' lives by giving blood.