

# Preparing for Your Blood Donation

What if we told you an hour of your time could change someone's life? It can. In the time it takes you to read this page, nearly 100 people will receive lifesaving transfusions. By taking just an hour or so to donate, you will do something wonderful.

**Before you roll up your sleeve to help someone else, please take care of yourself:**



**Eat** a healthy, low-fat meal within two hours of your donation. The day before, eat a salty snack. When you donate blood, you lose about a gram of salt. Replacing it ahead of time helps keep your blood pressure normal.



**Hydrate** by drinking 8 to 16 ounces of non-alcoholic beverages one hour before you donate. Water or sport drinks are great choices.

We are grateful to have you join us and, together, we will do something amazing to change people's lives!

**Bring your ID** with you so we know you're you—something with your name and one of the following: date of birth, donor ID number or your photo.

Now, on to saving lives!



## Before donation

1. We'll greet you with a smile and check you in for your appointment.
2. Our staff will guide you to a private area to review your health history and check your temperature, pulse and blood pressure.
3. We'll take a drop of blood from your finger to measure the level of your hemoglobin to ensure it's high enough for you to safely give blood.



## Donation

1. After you've been cleared to make your life-transforming donation, we'll help get you comfortable. Our specially-trained staff will explain everything about the donation process. Please ask us any questions.
2. We'll use antiseptic to clean the inside of your elbow and quickly and gently insert a new, sterile, disposable needle to collect your blood. (If you're nervous, don't worry. Our staff will help you feel comfortable throughout every step of the process).
3. Donating whole blood takes about 10 minutes. We'll ask you to squeeze your fist periodically to encourage good blood flow. When your donation is complete, our staff will remove the needle and bandage your arm.



## After donation

1. Celebrate your amazing achievement! Relax in our refreshment area for at least 15 minutes to enjoy light snacks along with a beverage to replenish your fluids.
2. Avoid strenuous activity and heavy lifting for the rest of the day.
3. Back in the lab, we'll check your blood type and perform testing to ensure a safe blood supply. Then, we'll separate your donation into red blood cells, platelets and plasma. Finally, we'll label and deliver the components to hospitals for patient transfusion.



Your simple, lifesaving action today has the remarkable power to transform lives for many tomorrows. We are grateful you are in our community and we are inspired by your decision to help others.



To learn more, please visit us at  
[vitalant.org/Donate/Donation-Process.aspx](https://vitalant.org/Donate/Donation-Process.aspx)

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