

## **FAQs...**

### **Can I get AIDS from giving blood?**

No, you cannot contract diseases from giving blood. The needle used for your donation is sterile, single-use, and disposable.

### **Can I donate if I'm anemic?**

Anemia is a state of lowered iron content in your body that is affected by diet and can change daily. A drop of your blood will be tested before you donate, and if you do not meet our requirement, you will not be able to donate until your iron content is raised. It is a good idea to eat iron-rich foods or take vitamins with iron for several days before your donation.

### **Will I feel weak if they take all that blood?**

The amount taken is less than a pint, and the average adult has 10-12 pints. Your body makes new blood constantly, and what you donate is replaced within hours. However, it is important to eat before donating and drink extra fluids. You should also refrain from strenuous activity or exercise for about 24 hours after the donation.

### **How long does it take?**

It takes approximately 45 minutes to go through the screening and donation process. After you register, you will receive educational information and then proceed with the mini-physical. This includes blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and red blood cell levels. Next you will answer health related questions. If you are eligible, you can proceed with the donation, which only takes 6-10 minutes, and then enjoy a brief rest and light refreshments.

### **What are the eligibility requirements?**

You must be at least 17 years old, 110 lbs., and in good health. You can donate every 8 weeks.

### **May I donate if I'm on medications or have had a serious illness?**

Many medications, including those for high blood pressure, are acceptable as long as you pass our mini-physical. You may donate after an illness once you are recovered.

### **What if I have hay fever, or take allergy shots or antibiotics?**

You can donate blood if you are feeling well. When you have taken antibiotics for active infection, you must be off medicine for 48 hours and be well before you can donate.

### **Does it hurt?**

Initially, you may feel a quick pinch from the needle. Giving blood is not painful, but almost everyone feels nervous the first time they donate.

### **What if I have high blood pressure or am diabetic?**

If your blood pressure is within certain limits when it is measured before your donation, you can still donate. Diabetics can donate, even those requiring insulin injections, provided that they are well at time of donation.

### **Can I donate if I've taken aspirin?**

Aspirin has a negative effect on platelets, but has no effect on red cells. A person taking aspirin may donate and their blood will be made into all useful components except platelets.

### **What if I just had major surgery?**

If you have had major surgery, but have been released from your physician's care to return to normal activities, you can donate. If you received blood during surgery, or don't know if you were transfused before or during surgery, you must wait 12 months to donate.

(FAQs continued)

### **Do I get paid for my donation?**


No, the blood we collect is from volunteer donors. Places that pay for donations are plasma centers, which are for-profit businesses that collect plasma to sell to pharmaceutical companies.


### **What if I have traveled to Europe?**


Many people who have lived in or repeatedly traveled to Europe may be deferred due to risks for vCJD (Mad Cow). The actual time spent in Europe that causes a deferral varies for each country and is cumulative starting from 1980; for example, anyone who has spent more than 3 months in England between 1980 and 1996, or more than 5 years in Europe since 1980, would not be able to donate. Donors associated with the military (either in the military or as a civilian military employee or dependant) may be deferred due to only a six month stay in parts of Europe. Please direct donors who think they might be deferred to the FGBA staff during registration about travel to Europe.


### **What happens to my blood after donating?**


Your blood will be tested for blood type, hepatitis, HIV, HTLV, and syphilis. Then it will be used as either whole blood for one patient or separated into components for several patients. You can check the results of your donation via phone or [www.giveblood.com](http://www.giveblood.com) several days after your donation, and your donor ID card will be mailed out to you a few weeks after your donation.


 Fact: An automobile accident victim receives up to 50 units of red blood cells.


 Fact: An organ transplant recipient receives up to 40 units of red blood cells, 30 units of platelets, and 25 units of plasma. Before a liver transplant can occur, 200 units of that blood type must be on hand.


 Fact: A marrow transplant receives 20 units of red blood cells and 120 units of platelets.

 Fact: A cancer patient receives up to eight units of platelets per week.

 Fact: A heart surgery patient receives six units of red blood cells and six units of platelets.

 Fact: A Sickle Cell Anemia patient receives up to four units of red blood cells per treatment.

 Fact: There are four major blood groups: A, B, AB, O. Each is divided into Rh positive or negative. A patient's blood and the donor blood being transfused should match both ABO group and Rh type.

 Fact: There is no substitute for human blood, and it can not be manufactured in any way.