

# Making Your Blood Donation Safe

## Thank You for Coming in Today!

This information sheet explains how you can help us make the donation process safe for yourself and the patients who might receive your blood. If you have any questions now or anytime during the screening process, please ask a LifeStream staff member. LifeStream respects the privacy of its donors. We collect and use personal information such as: name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address when a donor voluntarily provides it to us. This information is kept on file for future recruitment purposes and may be required to submit to local, state and federal health agencies. LifeStream does NOT sell, trade, or share its donor list with any other organization and never sends out mailings on behalf of other organizations.

By giving us your telephone number(s), including your cell phone number, you acknowledge that you as the subscriber expressly consent to this future contact, including contact via auto-dial and auto-text message.

## YOU MUST READ THIS BEFORE YOU DONATE!

- Your accurate and honest responses are critical to the safety of patients who receive blood transfusions.
- Each question is necessary to fully evaluate the safety of your donation.
- As required by regulations, we are instructing you not to donate blood if you have a risk factor.
- If you don't understand a question, ask the blood center staff for assistance.
- YOUR RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL.

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

- Ask about your health and medications you are taking or have taken.
- Ask if you have traveled to or lived in other countries.
- Ask about your risk for infections that can be transmitted by blood - especially HIV (which is the virus that causes AIDS), and viral hepatitis.
- Take your blood pressure, temperature, and pulse.
- Take a blood sample to be sure your blood count is acceptable before you donate.

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

- Clean your arm with an antiseptic (Tell us if you have any skin allergies).
- Use a sterile needle and tubing set to collect your blood.

We NEVER reuse a needle or tubing set.

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOUR DONATION

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

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## DONOR ELIGIBILITY – SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Certain infectious diseases, such as HIV and hepatitis, can be spread through:

- Sexual contact
- Other activities that increase risk
- Blood transfusion

We will ask specific questions about sexual contact and other activities that may increase risk for these infections.

## 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. These questions apply to all of the activities below, whether or not medications, condoms or other protection were used to prevent infection or pregnancy:

- 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)

## A “new sexual partner” includes the following examples:

- Having sex with someone for the first time  
OR
- Having had sex with someone in a relationship that ended in the past, and having sex again with that person in the last 3 months.

## HIV/Hepatitis risk factors

HIV and hepatitis are spread mainly by sexual contact with an infected person OR by sharing needles or syringes used by an infected person to inject drugs.

## DO NOT DONATE if you:

- Have EVER taken any medication to treat HIV infection.
- Are taking any medication to prevent HIV infection. These medications may be called: PrEP, PEP, TRUVADA, DESCovy, APREtUDE or many other names.

FDA-approved antiretroviral drugs are safe and effective in preventing sexual transmission of HIV. However, these antiretroviral drugs do not fully eliminate the virus from the body, and donated blood can potentially still transmit HIV infection to a transfusion recipient.

**DO NOT STOP** TAKING ANY PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS IN ORDER TO DONATE BLOOD, INCLUDING PrEP and PEP MEDICATIONS.

## DO NOT DONATE if you:

- Have EVER had a positive test for HIV infection.
- In the past 3 months:
  - o Have had sexual contact with a new partner **and** have had anal sex.
  - o Have had sexual contact with more than one partner **and** have had anal sex.

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- o Have had sexual contact with anyone who has ever had a positive test for HIV infection.
- o Have received money, drugs, or other payment for sex.
- o Have used needles to inject drugs, steroids, or anything not prescribed by your doctor.
- o Have had sexual contact with anyone who has received money, drugs, or other payment for sex, or used needles to inject drugs, steroids, or anything not prescribed by their doctor.
- o Have had syphilis or gonorrhea or been treated for syphilis or gonorrhea.
- **In the past 12 months:**
  - o Have been in juvenile detention, lockup, jail or prison for 72 hours or more consecutively.
- Have **EVER** had Ebola virus infection or disease.

## DO NOT DONATE if you: have these symptoms which can be present before you test positive for HIV:

- Fever
- Enlarged lymph glands
- Sore throat
- Rash

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

## DO NOT DONATE:

- If you think you may be at risk for HIV or other infections.
- If your purpose for donating is to obtain test results for HIV or other infections. Ask us where you can be tested for HIV and other infections.
- If your donation might harm the patient who receives your blood.

## Blood Donation Risks

The risks associated with blood donation include bruising around the needle site (common); a sore arm; feeling dizzy, tired or weak; fainting (uncommon); irritation to arteries, nerves and tissues around the vein used for donation (more rare); and temporary lower blood volume and blood counts. With automated donations (also known as apheresis), other risks also include tingling or cold feeling; and possible allergic reactions.

## Important Information on Iron!

Iron deficiency in blood donors is much more common than previously thought, especially in certain groups, including:

- Females under age 50
- All donors who donate more than twice per year
- All donors under age 18

**THE PROBLEM:** Iron deficiency is common in blood donors.

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Every time you donate blood, your body loses a small amount of iron. Your body needs iron in order to make red blood cells and carry oxygen to your tissues and keep you healthy. Before you donate, we test your blood "hemoglobin" level to ensure you have enough red blood cells to donate safely, but blood centers do not directly check iron levels. It is possible to have low iron and still qualify to donate. Low iron can result in fatigue, restless legs, and in severe cases, decreased brain function.

**THE SOLUTION:** Replacing your iron after donation.

It is very important for blood donors to **eat healthy, iron-rich foods**, but those foods alone are usually not enough to replace the iron lost during donation. For that reason, LifeStream recommends that all donors, especially those in the above three categories, **consider taking low-dose iron**, as found in multivitamins with iron. **You should check with your doctor first** (or, if you are under 18, with a parent and your doctor), **because some people should NOT take iron.**

We want to keep you healthy! Please ask us about iron and your blood donation.

## **THANK YOU FOR DONATING BLOOD TODAY!**

LifeStream serves more than 80 medical facilities in San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, Orange and Imperial counties. In addition to our donor centers, multiple blood drives are held daily at local businesses, churches, government agencies, high schools, colleges, and civic organizations.

Source: AABB Blood Donor History Questionnaire [www.aabb.org](http://www.aabb.org)

For a list of LifeStream locations, visit [www.LStream.org](http://www.LStream.org).