

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.

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

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.

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

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).

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)



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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 ever had HIV/AIDS or have ever had a positive test for the HIV/AIDS virus
- Have used needles to take any drugs not prescribed by your doctor IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS
- Have taken money, drugs or other payment for sex IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS
- Have had sexual contact IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS with anyone who has ever had HIV/AIDS or has ever had a positive test for the HIV/AIDS virus, ever taken money, drugs or other payment for sex, or ever used needles to take any drugs not prescribed by their doctor
- Are a male who has had sexual contact with another male, IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS
- Are a female who has had sexual contact IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS with a male who has had sexual contact with another male IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS
- Have had syphilis or gonorrhea IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS
- Have been in juvenile detention, lockup, jail or prison for 72 or more consecutive hours IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS
- Have a history of Ebola virus infection or disease

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.

Do not donate if you have these symptoms which can be present before an HIV test turns positive:

- Fever
- Enlarged lymph glands
- Sore throat
- Rash

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.

IMPORTANT NEW INFORMATION

DO NOT DONATE if you:

- Are taking any medication to prevent HIV infection these medications may be known by you under the following names: PrEP, PEP, TRUVADA, or DESCOVY.
- Have taken such a medication in the past 3 months.
- Have EVER taken any medication to treat HIV infection.

DO NOT donate if your donation might harm the patient who receives the transfusion.

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.

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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.

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

For a list of LifeStream locations, visit www.LStream.org.