Making Your Blood Donation Safe

Pete Lawson
Burned in a wildfire, LifeStream blood donations saved his life.

LifeStream
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WWW.LSTREAM.ORG
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.

PLEASE READ 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 a LifeStream staff member.

All information you provide is confidential. 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.

The Donation Process
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
• Ask about any pregnancies you may have had. We are asking all donors (males and females) this question because of new FDA guidance regarding gender identity.

If you are eligible to donate, we will:
• Clean your arm with an antiseptic. Please 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 Blood 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).

**Please DO NOT DONATE BLOOD if you**
- Have **EVER** had Ebola virus disease or infection
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.

Facts About Communicable Diseases

All blood donors are asked questions about communicable diseases that may be transferred to a patient through blood transfusion. Please be accurate in your description of your medical and travel history to help us prevent spreading these infections.

Babesiosis: Caused by the bite of an infected tick, mostly in parts of New England, New York, New Jersey, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Symptoms range from none to flu-like, with rare severe fatigue due to anemia.

Chagas Disease: Transmitted by a bug bite, mainly in rural areas of Latin America. Most have no symptoms at first, but some have redness and swelling around the eyes, fever, fatigue, and body aches.

Chikungunya: Transmitted by mosquito bite, this virus is seen in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and recently in the Southern U.S. (Florida). Symptoms include fever and joint pain.

Dengue: Like Chikungunya, infected mosquitoes pass this virus in travelers to tropical parts of the world. Symptoms range from mild fever to severe bone pain and bleeding.

Malaria: Almost all U.S. infections occur in people who have traveled to a tropical area and are bitten by an infected mosquito. Symptoms include mild to severe fever, chills, sweating, and flu-like illness.
NEW! Important Information on Iron!

Recent studies have shown that iron deficiency in blood donors is much more common than previously thought. This is true even if you meet LifeStream’s blood screening standards, and is especially important for donors in certain groups.

THE PROBLEM: Iron deficiency is common in 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 to ensure you have enough red blood cells to donate safely (“hematocrit” or “checking your iron”). However, even if you pass the test, you may still not have enough iron in your body (we call this “iron deficiency”). Low iron can result in fatigue, restless legs, and in severe cases, decreased brain function. The blood donors at most risk for iron deficiency are:

1. Females under age 50
2. Females and males who donate blood more than twice per year
3. Females and males under age 18

THE SOLUTION: Improving your diet and replacing your iron works well.

While it is very important for blood donors to eat healthy, iron-rich foods like green leafy vegetables and red meat, studies show those foods 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 some multivitamins or iron pills. 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. You may also be approached about an iron replacement program at LifeStream.

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

THANK YOU FOR DONATING BLOOD TODAY!
“LifeStream blood donations saved my life.”

– PETE LAWSON
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.

**Donor Centers**

**SAN BERNARDINO**
384 W. Orange Show Road  
San Bernardino, CA 92408  
909.885.6503

**HIGH DESERT**
12520 Business Center Drive, Building G  
Victorville, CA 92395  
760.843.9700

**ONTARIO**
1959 E. Fourth St.  
Ontario, CA 91764  
909.987.3158

**RIVERSIDE**
4006 Van Buren Blvd.  
Riverside, CA 92503  
951.687.2530

**LA QUINTA**
79-215 Corporate Centre Drive  
La Quinta, CA 92253  
760.777.8844

**MURRIETA**
40365 Murrieta Hot Springs Road, Suite C-1  
Murrieta, CA 92563  
951.973.7777

Source: AABB Blood Donor History Questionnaire  
www.aabb.org

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