



**MAKE  
LIFESAVING  
A HABIT**

**Blood is traditionally in short supply during the winter months due to the holidays, travel schedules, inclement weather and illness. January, in particular, is a difficult month for blood centers to collect blood donations. A reduction in turnout can put our nation's blood inventory at a critical low.**

**What are the minimum requirements to become a blood donor?**

Check with your local blood bank to determine the exact requirements, but generally, you must be at least 16 years of age, a minimum of 110 pounds, and in basic good health.

**Will donating blood hurt?**

You may feel a slight sting in the beginning lasting only a couple of seconds, but there should be no discomfort during the donation.

**Are blood donors paid?**

No. Blood collected for transfusion in the US is given by volunteer blood donors.

**How badly is blood needed?**

Blood supplies can vary depending on the region and time of year. As donor qualifications continue to become stricter and as the donor population ages, our nation is at risk of a low blood supply. If you are eligible, your blood donations are needed.

**Why are there often blood shortages?**

Most blood centers strive to maintain an optimum inventory level of a three-day supply. Due to unpredictable demands from trauma incidents the inventory fluctuates hourly. When the blood supply drops below a three-day level, blood centers begin alerting local donors to increase the inventory to a safe operating level.

**Can I get AIDS from donating blood?**

No. There is no risk of contracting AIDS or any other disease through the donation process. Each collection kit is sterile, pre-packaged and used only once.

**Do I have enough blood in my body to donate?**

Yes. The body contains 10 to 12 pints of blood. Your whole blood donation is approximately one pint.

**How much time does it take for my body to replace the blood that I donated?**

Not long at all. The volume of fluids will adjust within a few hours of your donation. The red blood cells will be replaced within a few weeks.

**What does the term "donor deferral" mean?**

Individuals disqualified from donating blood are known as "deferred" donors. A prospective donor may be deferred at any point during the collection and testing process. Whether or not a person is deferred temporarily or permanently will depend on the specific reason for disqualification (e.g., a person may be deferred temporarily because of anemia, a condition that is usually reversible). If a person is to be deferred, his or her name is entered into a list of deferred donors maintained by the blood center, often known as the "deferral registry." If a deferred donor attempts to give blood before the end of the deferral period, the donor will not be accepted for donation. Once the reason for the deferral no longer exists and the temporary deferral period has lapsed, the donor may return to the blood bank and be re-entered into the system.

**Those who may be deferred include:**

- \* Anyone who has ever used intravenous drugs (illegal IV drugs)
- \* Men who have had sexual contact with other men since 1977
- \* Anyone who has ever received clotting factor concentrates
- \* Anyone with a positive test for HIV (AIDS virus)
- \* Men and women who have engaged in sex for money or drugs since 1977
- \* Anyone who has had hepatitis since his or her eleventh birthday
- \* Anyone who has had babesiosis or Chagas disease
- \* Anyone who has taken Tegison for psoriasis
- \* Anyone who has risk factors for Cruetzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) or who has an immediate family member with CJD
- \* Anyone who has risk factors for variant CJD
- \* Anyone who spent three months or more in the United Kingdom from 1980 through 1996
- \* Anyone who has spent five years in Europe from 1980 to the present.

**Source:  
[www.AABB.org](http://www.AABB.org)**

**Courtesy of Wellness Proposals**

