

Resources

Inova Blood Donor Services

inova.org/donateblood

1-866-BLOODSAVES

American Association of Blood Banks

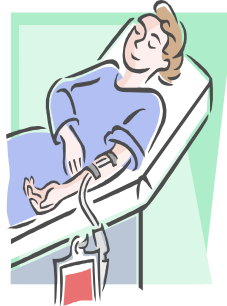
aabb.org

Blood Centers of America

www.bca-hemeric.com

America's Blood Centers

americasblood.org



September

2008

www.inova.org/chp



*Congregational
Health
Partnership
is a program of
Inova
Community
Affairs Division*



For Your Health

Save Lives . . . Give Blood Blood Donation and Everyone's Health

"He who saves one life...it is as if he saves an entire universe"

The Talmud

January is National Blood Donor month, but you don't have to wait to become someone's hero. With schools back in session, we chose September to explain and educate our community about the need for blood and raise awareness about how easy it is to save a life. Donating blood is not risky to your health. In fact, it helps your body when you donate on a regular basis. As with exercise, every time you donate, the bone marrow (where red cells are produced), work a little harder to restore the blood back to normal levels. Plus, fresh blood cells are not contaminated by high cholesterol or other conditions that may negatively affect your health. You can safely donate blood every 8 weeks. A whole blood donation is separated into red cells, platelets, and plasma.

- ♥ Red cells carry life-saving oxygen.
- ♥ Platelets help clot the blood for healing
- ♥ Plasma replaces fluid.

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Articles in this newsletter are not a substitute for the care and advice of medical professionals. When you have a question or need medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, consult your physician.

This newsletter is produced by Inova Health System in conjunction with your faith community. If you prefer not to receive this newsletter, please notify the appropriate personnel in your faith community.

Inova Health System is a not-for-profit health care system based in Northern Virginia that consists of hospitals and other health services including emergency and urgent care centers, home care, nursing homes, mental health, blood donor services, and wellness classes. Governed by a voluntary board of community members, Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community we serve through excellence in patient care, education and research.



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Why Donate?

In the United States, nearly 40% of the population is eligible to donate blood. Yet only 5% ever do.

Patients being treated for cancer, leukemia, or sickle cell anemia, accident victims, and organ transplant patients all need blood to survive. A cancer patient may use up to 8 units of red cells per week; an organ transplant could use over 100 components; a burn victim could use 20 or more platelets and plasma units. With new, innovative life-saving technology, blood and blood products play a crucial part in helping doctors sustain life longer. Until synthetic blood is produced, it is critical that healthy people continue to donate on a regular basis.

Am I Eligible?

Effective July 1, 2008, Virginia law now allows 16 year olds with parental consent to donate. As always, there is no upper age limit for blood donation. You must weigh at least 110 pounds and be in good health. Conditions such as diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and asthma which are controlled by medication do not prevent blood donation. Many cancers are acceptable with 5 years in remission. However, previous blood cancers such as leukemia, lymphoma and melanoma are not allowed.

And remember, even if you can't donate blood, you can help recruit and register blood donors at the drives. If you recruit two donors, you have doubled your contribution!



What Can I Expect When I Donate?

When you register to donate, you will be given important information that you must read before filling out the medical history form. You will need photo identification.

In the private screening area, the historian will review your form, check your identification and proceed with a general medical evaluation. This will consist of taking your blood pressure, temperature, pulse and checking your iron level with a finger stick. Based on this little "mini physical" you may or may not be eligible to donate. The Food and Drug Administration has strict standards in place for blood donation. This process will take between 7-10 minutes.

If you are eligible, you will be seated in a donor chair, the donation site will be sterilized and a Donor Specialist will draw your blood. Each individual may have a slightly different experience as the needle is inserted just under the skin into the vein. It is usually a very brief and fairly painless procedure.

Your actual donation time should be no longer than 5-7 minutes with a maximum time of 15 minutes. If you do not finish donating within 15 minutes, the needle is withdrawn and the donation stopped. The site where the needle was inserted will be bandaged.

After your donation is complete:

- ♥ Visit the canteen for refreshments for 10 minutes
- ♥ Drink plenty of hydrating fluids such as water and sports drinks
- ♥ No smoking for an hour after donation
- ♥ No heavy lifting with the donation arm
- ♥ Eat well for the rest of the day