



**CASCADE REGIONAL  
BLOOD SERVICES**  
YOUR COMMUNITY BLOOD CENTER

# FACTS ABOUT DONATING **BLOOD**

## **WHY SHOULD I DONATE BLOOD?**

Blood donors save lives. Volunteer blood donors provide 100 percent of our community's blood supply. Almost all of us will need blood products.

## **WHO CAN DONATE BLOOD?**

Generally, you are eligible to donate if you are 16 years of age or older, weigh at least 110 pounds and are in good health. Donors under 18 must have written permission from a parent or guardian prior to donation.

## **DOES IT HURT TO GIVE BLOOD?**

The sensation you feel is similar to a slight pinch on the arm. The process of drawing blood should take less than ten minutes.

## **HOW DO I PREPARE FOR A BLOOD DONATION?**

We recommend that donors be well rested, eat a healthy meal, drink plenty of fluids and avoid caffeine and alcohol prior to donating.

## **WHAT CAN I EXPECT WHEN I DONATE?**

At every donation, you will fill out a short health history questionnaire. You will also receive a mini-physical, which includes checking your pulse, blood pressure, temperature and iron level. From registration to juice and cookies, the entire process takes 40–50 minutes.

## **WHERE IS MY BLOOD USED?**

CRBS supplies blood to MultiCare Health System and Franciscan Health System hospitals and clinics in Pierce and South King Counties. CRBS also participates in national resource sharing programs.

## **CAN I DONATE IF I AM ON MEDICATION?**

Most of the time, prescriptions do not interfere with donating blood, but not always. A donor specialist can answer your medication questions and review your medical history with you. All information is confidential.

## **HOW MUCH BLOOD DO I HAVE?**

An adult has about 10–11 pints.

## **HOW MUCH BLOOD WILL I DONATE?**

Whole blood donors give 500 milliliters, about one pint.

## **WHAT HAPPENS TO BLOOD AFTER I DONATE?**

Your blood is tested, separated into components, then distributed to local hospitals and trauma centers for patient transfusions.

## **WHAT ARE THE MAIN BLOOD COMPONENTS?**

Frequently transfused components include red blood cells, which replace blood loss in patients during surgery or trauma; platelets, which are often used to control or prevent bleeding in surgery and trauma patients; and plasma, which helps stop bleeding and can be used to treat severe burns. Both red blood cells and platelets are often used to support patients undergoing cancer treatments.

## **WHEN CAN I DONATE AGAIN?**

You can donate whole blood every eight weeks, platelets every seven days up to 24 times in a twelve-month period. We normally ask platelet donors to donate every 14 days, unless an extraordinary situation exists. Plasma donors are eligible to donate every 28 days.

## **WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW MY BLOOD TYPE?**

You do not need to know your blood type to donate blood. After your first donation, we will mail a donor card to you, which includes your blood type.

## **WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?**

Please contact one of our donor specialists at 1-877-24-BLOOD or visit our website at [www.crbs.net](http://www.crbs.net). They are happy to answer any questions you may have.

**1-877-24-BLOOD**

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**WWW.CRBS.NET**