

56 FACTS ABOUT BLOOD AND BLOOD DONATION



1. More than 4.5 million patients need blood transfusions each year in the US and Canada.
2. Each day 43,000 units of donated blood are used in the US and Canada.
3. Someone needs blood every 2 seconds.
4. About 37 out of every 100 Americans are eligible to donate blood – but only 3 to 4 people actually donate each year. *
5. On average, 1 out of every 7 people entering the hospital will need blood.
6. Hospitals can only receive blood from volunteer donors.
7. One blood donation could save up to 3 lives.
8. Any healthy person 19 or older who weighs at least 112 pounds may be eligible to donate. Donors who are 16 require parental consent. Donors age 16, 17, and 18 have special height and weight requirements.
9. Women and girls receive 53 percent of blood transfusions; men and boys receive 47 percent.
10. More than 75 percent of all Americans reaching age 72 will need blood in their lifetimes; 97 percent will have a loved one or friend who will need blood.
11. There are four main red blood cell types = A, B, AB and O. Each can be positive or negative.
12. Dr. Karl Landsteiner first identified the four main blood cell types in 1901.
13. Healthy bone marrow is constantly producing red cells, plasma and platelets.
14. One unit of whole blood can be separated into several components: red cells, plasma, and platelets.
15. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body's organs and tissues.
16. Red blood cells live about 120 days in the circulatory system.
17. Platelets promote blood clotting and can give people with leukemia and other cancers a chance to live.
18. Red blood cells are in the greatest demand and you can double your impact by giving two units of red cells (double red donation) in one visit.
19. Plasma, which is 90 percent water, is often used in the treatment of burn victims.
20. Donated platelets can only be stored (at room temperature) for 5 days.
21. Donated red blood cells can only be stored (refrigerated) for 42 days.
22. Donated plasma can only be stored (frozen) for a year.
23. Apheresis is a special kind of blood donation that allows a donor to give one specific blood component, such as platelets or plasma.
24. Whole blood can be donated every 56 days, plasma every 28 days, platelets every 14 days, and double red cell donations every 112 days (up to 3 times a year).
25. Children being treated for cancer, premature infants, and children having heart surgery need blood and platelets from donors of all types, especially type O.
26. Patients with kidney issues may need blood transfusions to increase red blood cell levels.
27. Three units is the amount of the average red blood cell transfusion.**
28. Cancer, transplant, and trauma patients, as well as patients undergoing open-heart surgery, may need platelet transfusions to survive.
29. Sickle cell disease is an inherited disease that affects more than 80,000 people in the US, 98% of whom are of African descent. Blood transfusions are often used in treatment.
30. A patient who needs an organ transplant could be forced to pass up lifesaving surgery if compatible blood is not available to support the transplant.
31. Every blood donation goes through 14 rigorous tests to ensure a safe blood supply.

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32. Seventeen percent of people who don't give blood cite "never thought about it" as the main reason for not donating, while 15 percent say they're "too busy."
33. The #1 reason blood donors say they give is that they "want to help others."
34. Shortages of all blood types are most likely to occur during the summer and winter holidays, when schools are out and many people are on vacation.
35. Many U.S. blood banks often run short of types O and B red blood cells.
36. There is no substitute for human blood.
37. The average Michigan Blood donor gives less than twice a year. If all blood donors gave three times a year, blood shortages would be rare.
38. If just 1% more Americans would give blood, blood shortages would disappear for the foreseeable future.
39. You cannot get AIDS or any other infectious disease by donating blood.
40. You can donate blood if you got a flu shot.
41. The average adult body contains 10 pints of blood.
42. Donating blood burns 650 calories.
43. O-negative blood is the universal red cell donor (i.e. anyone can receive it).
44. Only 9% of Michigan's population has O-negative blood.
45. AB-type blood is the universal plasma donor (i.e. anyone can receive it).
46. Less than 5% of the population has AB-type blood (negative OR positive), which means there is ALWAYS a shortage of AB-type plasma.
47. Because platelets make up just 3% of your blood, and can only last for 5 days outside the body, hospitals are ALWAYS in need of it.
48. Donating whole blood usually takes just 7-10 minutes.
49. After donating blood, your body replaces fluid volume within hours. Red cell and platelet replacement can take several weeks.
50. Every time you donate blood, you get a free mini-physical.
51. Blood drives hosted by companies, schools, places of worship, and civic organizations supply 70% of all Michigan Blood donations.
52. School blood drives alone make up about 25% of all Michigan Blood donations each year.
53. The easiest way to find out your blood type? Donate blood! Michigan Blood sends an email one week after your first donation to tell you your blood type.
54. Many diseases do NOT exempt people from donating blood, so long as they are currently feeling well (ex: diabetes, asthma, Lyme disease).
55. Michigan Blood employees can help answer questions about donor eligibility regarding medications, illnesses, and more. Just call 1.866.MIBLOOD (652.5663)!
56. Blood types of the U.S. population:

38% are O+	34% are A+	9% are B+	3% are AB+
7% are O-	6% are A-	2% are B-	1% are AB-

* Riley, et al. The United States' potential blood donor pool: estimating the prevalence of donor-exclusion factors on the pool of potential donors. Transfusion 2007.

** The 2007 National Blood Collection and Utilization Survey Report, US Department of Health & Human Services