

Know the Numbers: Blood Donation Quick Facts

- Every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood.
- More than 38,000 blood donations are needed every day.
- The blood used in an emergency is already on the shelves before the event occurs.
- More than 1 million new people are diagnosed with cancer each year. Many of them will need blood, sometimes daily, during their chemotherapy treatment.
- A single car accident victim can require as many as 100 units of blood.
- The number of blood donors in the U.S. in a year: 8 million (2001).
- The number of patients who receive blood in the U.S. in a year: 4.9 million.
- Less than 38% of the U.S. population is eligible to donate blood.
- Blood cannot be manufactured — it can only come from generous volunteer donors.
- Shortages of all blood types usually occur during the summer and winter holidays.
- Donating blood is a safe process. Your one donation is tested 13 times to ensure the safety and reliability of the blood supply for patients in need.
- Every blood donor is given a mini-physical, checking the donor's temperature, blood pressure, pulse and iron count to ensure it is safe for him or her to give blood.
- The actual blood donation typically takes 5 – 10 minutes. The entire process, from the time you arrive to the time you leave, takes about 45 minutes.
- The average adult has about 10 to 12 pints of blood in his body. Roughly 1 pint is given during a donation.
- Whole blood can be processed into red cells, platelets and plasma.
- It is possible to donate one specific blood component such as platelets. This process is called apheresis.
- Donated platelets must be used within 5 days of collection — new donations are constantly needed.
- Healthy bone marrow makes a constant supply of red cells, plasma and platelets. The body will replenish the elements given during a blood donation.
- The #1 reason donors say they give blood is because they “want to help others”.
- The most common reason cited by people who don't give blood is: “I was never asked”.
- One donation can help save the lives of up to 3 people.
- If you began donating blood at age 17 and donated every 56 days until you reached 76, you would have donated 48 gallons of blood, potentially helping save over 1,000 lives!
- People with O- type blood are universal donors. Their blood can be given to people of all blood types.
- Type O- blood is often used in emergencies before the patient's blood type is known, and with newborns who need blood.
- The most rare blood type is the one that is not on the shelf! Give blood, save lives and find the hero in you.

