Donor Educational Materials

Making Your Blood Donation Safe

Your blood can transmit infections, including HIV/AIDS, even if you feel well and all your tests are normal. This is because even the best tests cannot detect the virus for a period of time after you are infected.

**DO NOT donate to get a test!** If you think you may be at risk for HIV/AIDS or any other infection, do not donate simply to get a test. Ask us where you can be tested outside the blood center.

The following symptoms can be present before an HIV test turns positive:
- Fever
- Enlarged lymph glands
- Sore throat
- Rash

**DO NOT donate if you have these symptoms!**

**Why we ask about travel to or birth in other countries:**
Blood tests may not be available for some infections that are found only in certain countries. If you were born in, have lived in, or visited certain countries, you may not be eligible to donate.

**Why we ask about contact with someone else’s blood**
Infectious diseases may be spread through contact with blood. We ask questions about contact with someone else’s blood because this contact may present a risk to patients receiving a transfusion. When we ask about contact with blood, we mean any of the following:
- Exposure to non-intact skin (open wounds or skin that is chapped, scraped, or afflicted with dermatitis)
- An accidental needle-stick or other sharps injury that has been used on any individual or patient
- A human bite that breaks the skin
- Exposure to eye, nose, or mouth (mucous membranes)

If you have had any of these risk factors in the last 12 months, do **not** donate. If you work with patients or around blood, please carefully consider the last 12 months to ensure that none of these exposure risk factors apply to you.

**Information about Ebola Virus Disease or Infection**
Please **DO NOT DONATE BLOOD** if you have **EVER** had Ebola virus disease or infection.

**What Happens After Your Donation**
To protect patients, your blood is tested for several types of hepatitis, HIV, syphilis, and other infections. If your blood tests positive, it will not be given to a patient. There are times when your blood is not tested. If this occurs, you may not receive any notification. You will be notified about test results that may disqualify you from donating in the future. The blood center will not release your test results without your written permission unless required by law (e.g. to the Health Department).

After you donate, we will ask that you not participate (for the remainder of the day) in strenuous activity or critical work where safety requires your maximum abilities.