

# Blood Donor Educational Materials:

**MAKING YOUR BLOOD DONATION SAFE**  
**READ THIS BEFORE YOU DONATE!**



We know that you would not donate unless you think your blood is safe. However, in order for us to assess all risks that may affect you or a patient receiving a transfusion, it is essential that you answer each question completely and accurately. If you don't understand a question, ask the blood center staff. All information you provide is confidential.

### **To determine if you are eligible to donate we will:**

- Ask about your health and travel
- Ask about medicines you are taking or have taken
- Ask about your risk for infections that can be transmitted by blood – especially AIDS and viral hepatitis
- Take your blood pressure, temperature and pulse
- Take a blood sample to be sure your blood count is acceptable

### **Travel to or birth in other countries**

Blood donor 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.

### **If you are eligible to donate we will:**

- Clean your arm with an antiseptic. Tell us if you have any skin allergies
- Use a new, sterile, disposable needle to collect your blood

### **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 any positive test result which 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).

### **DONOR ELIGIBILITY – SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

Certain diseases, such as AIDS and hepatitis, can be spread through sexual contact and enter your bloodstream. We will ask specific questions about sexual contact.

### **What do we mean by “sexual contact?”**

The words “have sexual contact with” and “sex” are used in some of the questions we will ask you, and apply to any of the activities below, whether or not a condom or other protection was used:

- Vaginal sex (contact between penis and vagina)
- Oral sex (mouth or tongue on someone's vagina, penis, or anus)
- Anal sex (contact between penis and anus)

### **HIV/AIDS risk behaviors**

HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. It is spread mainly by sexual contact with an infected person OR by sharing needles or syringes used by an infected person for injecting drugs.

### **Do not donate if you:**

- Have ever had HIV/AIDS or have ever had a positive test for the HIV/AIDS virus
- Have used needles to take any drugs not prescribed by your doctor IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS
- Have taken money, drugs or other payment for sex IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS

- Have had sexual contact in IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS with anyone who has ever had HIV/AIDS or has ever had a positive test for the HIV/AIDS virus, ever taken money, drugs or other payment for sex, or ever used needles to take any drugs not prescribed by their doctor
- Are a male who has had sexual contact with another male IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS.
- Are a female who has had sexual contact IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS with a male who has had sexual contact with another male IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS
- Have had syphilis or gonorrhea IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS
- Have been in juvenile detention, lockup, jail or prison for more than 72 consecutive hours IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS
- Have a history of Ebola virus infection or disease

**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.

**DO NOT donate if you have these symptoms which can be present** before an HIV test turns positive:

- Fever
- Enlarged lymph glands
- Sore throat
- Rash

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.

### **IMPORTANT NEW INFORMATION**

**DO NOT DONATE if you:**

- **Are taking any medications to prevent an HIV infection. These medications may be called: PrEP, PEP, TRUVADA, DESCOVY, APRETUDE or many other names**
- **Have taken any medication by mouth in the past 3 months to prevent an HIV infection.**
- **Have received an injection or shot in the past 2 years to prevent an HIV infection.**
- **Have EVER taken any medication to treat an HIV infection.**

***DO NOT Donate if your donation might harm the patient who receives the transfusion.***

**Frequent Donors:** Recent scientific studies have shown that frequent blood donations reduce the amount of iron stored in the body. If you donate red blood cells two or more times per year, please consider taking an over-the-counter iron supplement.

## **Thank you for donating blood today!**

### **Metro Area:**

Memorial Blood Centers  
737 Pelham Boulevard  
St. Paul, MN 55114  
651.332.7000

### **Northland:**

Memorial Blood Centers  
5115 Burning Tree Rd.  
Duluth, MN 55811  
218.723.8080