

# About Platelet Donations

Platelets are a component of your blood that helps blood to clot. Platelets only last 5 days and there is always a high demand due to their short shelf life and constant patient need.

**EMILY** needed 138 transfusions to survive a car accident.



## Why do patients need platelets?

**Platelets** are very fragile, short lived blood cells that are essential for normal blood clotting. They must be transfused within 5 days of donation which makes it necessary for us to provide hospitals with a fresh supply of platelets daily.

### Platelets are often used to treat:

- Cancer patients undergoing treatment that depletes their platelet count
- Accident victims
- Patients with blood disorders
- Bone marrow transplant patients

Platelets  
only last  
5 days

## What is it like to donate platelets?

A small amount of blood is drawn and then takes a spin in a centrifuge to separate your platelets from other blood components. The platelets are collected in separate bags and the remainder of your blood is returned to you along with some anticoagulant. This cycle is repeated several times to generate the required volume of platelets.

## Why not take platelets from my whole blood donation?

It takes six to ten blood donors to obtain the same amount of platelets we can get from a single platelet-only donation. Patients usually require that amount per treatment and quite often, more. So, instead of six to ten blood donors, it takes just one platelet donor to provide a patient with one treatment of platelets.

## Not everyone can donate platelets ... Can I?

The eligibility guidelines to donate platelets are like whole blood except height, weight, blood type, platelet count and medications you may take also play a role. When donating platelets, we ask you to refrain from aspirin or products containing aspirin for 48 hours prior to donation. Although it may be safe for you to take aspirin, it can compromise the platelets being collected and your donation cannot be given to a patient.

## How much time should I allow?

From registration through refreshment, when you donate platelets you should allow about 2.5 hours. This allows you plenty of time to register and answer the questionnaire, give your donation and then relax for 15 minutes or more after. This extra time you take to give is vitally important to collect the much-needed platelets patients rely on every day.

## How often can I give platelets?

You can donate platelets every seven days, up to 24 times a year! Please consider donating platelets as part of your regular routine.

## Want to know more or make an appointment?

For general information or to make an appointment to donate platelets call **1.800.933.BLOOD (2566)** or visit **[www.nybc.org/plt](http://www.nybc.org/plt)**.

For more information regarding medical eligibility for platelet donation call **1.800.688.0900**.



#nybloodcenter

1.800.933.BLOOD

**New York** Blood Center