

50 Quick Facts

Facts about blood needs

- Every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood.
- More than 38,000 blood donations are needed every day.
- A total of 30 million blood components are transfused each year in the U.S. (2006).
- The average red blood cell transfusion is approximately 3 pints.
- The blood type most often requested by hospitals is Type O.
- The blood used in an emergency is already on the shelves before the event occurs.
- Sickle cell disease affects more than 80,000 people in the U.S., 98 percent of whom are African American. Sickle cell patients can require frequent blood transfusions throughout their lives.
- 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 pints of blood.

Facts about the blood supply

- The number of blood donations collected in the U.S. in a year: 16 million (2006).
- The number of blood donors in the U.S. in a year: 9.5 million (2006).
- The number of patients who receive blood in the U.S. in a year: 5 million (2006).
- Share of the U.S. population eligible to give blood: Less than 38 percent.
- Blood cannot be manufactured – it can only come from generous donors.
- Type O-negative blood (red cells) can be transfused to patients of all blood types. It is always in great demand and often in short supply.
- Type AB-positive plasma can be transfused to patients of all other blood types. AB plasma is also usually in short supply.

Facts about the blood donation process

- Donating blood is a safe process. A sterile needle is used only once for each donor and then discarded.
- Blood donation is a simple four-step process: registration, medical history and mini-physical, donation and refreshments.
- Every blood donor is given a mini-physical, checking the donor's temperature, blood pressure, pulse and hemoglobin to ensure it is safe for the donor to give blood.
- The actual blood donation typically takes less than 10-12 minutes. The entire process, from the time you arrive to the time you leave, takes about an hour and 15 min.
- The average adult has about 10 pints of blood in his body. Roughly 1 pint is given during a donation.
- A healthy donor may donate red blood cells every 56 days, or double red cells every 112 days.
- A healthy donor may donate platelets as few as 7 days apart, but a maximum of 24 times a year.
- All donated blood is tested for HIV, hepatitis B and C, syphilis and other infectious diseases before it can be released to hospitals.
- Information you give to the American Red Cross during the donation process is confidential. It may not be released without your permission except as directed by law.

Facts about blood and its components

- Four types of transfusable products can be derived from blood: red cells, platelets, plasma and cryoprecipitate. Typically, two or three of these are produced from a pint of donated whole blood – hence each donation can help save up to three lives.



**American
Red Cross**