

# Blood Donation FAQ

## Why is Donating Blood Important?

- **Life-Saving:** Donating blood can save lives, as donated blood is used in medical emergencies, surgeries, cancer treatments, and for patients with conditions like anemia or sickle cell disease.
- **Continuous Need:** Blood is perishable and only lasts for a limited time (red blood cells last up to 42 days). Regular donations are needed to ensure a constant supply.

## Who Needs Blood Donations?

- **Trauma Patients:** Accidents, surgeries, and natural disasters often require large amounts of blood for recovery.
- **Cancer Patients:** Blood products are crucial for patients undergoing chemotherapy, as treatments can lower blood cell counts.
- **People with Chronic Conditions:** Individuals with conditions like sickle cell anemia or thalassemia often need regular blood transfusions.
- **Premature Babies:** Neonates may require blood transfusions to support their fragile health.

## Who is Eligible to Donate Blood?

- **Age and Weight:** Donors must be at least 17 years old (16 with parent/guardian consent) and weigh at least 110 lbs.
- **Health:** Donors must be in good general health and complete a brief health screening prior to donating.

## What is the Donation Process Like?

- **Registration:** Get checked in. Review the donor education materials and complete the health history questionnaire.
- **Screening:** Review your health history with a CBC donor technician and get a mini physical (pulse, blood pressure, temperature, hemoglobin).
- **Blood Donation:** A donor technician will check your veins and prepare your arm for the donation. The actual blood draw only takes about 10-15 minutes.
- **Recovery:** Get sweet treats and juice and you're on your way!

## What Can I Do to Prepare for My Donation?

- **Eat and Drink:** Drink plenty of water and eat healthy, iron-rich meals.
- **What to Bring:** Bring a photo ID, list of medications, and international travel history.