

# Be ready to donate blood

When you donate blood, you are potentially saving a life. The American Red Cross estimates that someone needs blood every two seconds. Your donation makes that possible. The donation process is pretty simple, but there are a few things you should know in advance to prepare.

## DONATION ELIGIBILITY

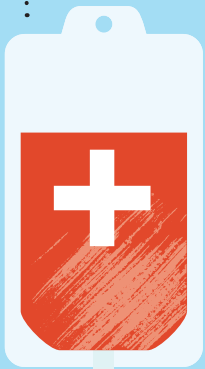
To donate blood, you must meet specific criteria. These include:

- Being healthy and not currently ill
- Over the age of 16 (in most states)
- Weigh at least 110 pounds
- Have not given blood in the past 56 days

## WHEN YOU GO TO DONATE

It can help relieve any nervousness if you know what to expect before you go. Most donation centers follow a standard process.

- **Registration:** verification of eligibility, checking your driver's license, and providing your address.
- **Health history:** information on health conditions, medications, and recent travel.
- **Health screening:** checking your temperature, pulse, blood pressure, and hemoglobin.
- **The donation:** takes about 8-10 minutes, during which time you will sit or lay comfortably.
- **Recovery:** takes 10-15 minutes, during which time you'll receive a snack and drink and make sure you feel ready to go.



## WHEN YOU SHOULD NOT DONATE

In addition to meeting the eligibility criteria above, there may be other things that could temporarily disqualify you from donating.

- You are not feeling 100%. Only donate blood if you are feeling your best. If you are sick, you should wait until 24 hours after your symptoms pass.
- Certain kinds of medications and vaccinations may require a waiting period before giving blood. Check with the American Red Cross before you go.
- Low iron may cause anemia or a low blood count, making you ineligible to donate blood that day. Once your iron levels have improved, you may be able to donate.
- If you have traveled to certain countries outside the U.S., you may need to wait to donate blood.

Source: The American Red Cross