



**American Red Cross**

Blood Services  
Great Lakes Region



## FAQs About Double Red Cell

### *Donating Double Red Cell through the American Red Cross*

**Red blood cells** carry oxygen to all parts of the body. They are most needed after significant blood loss through trauma, surgery or anemia. **Double red cell collection technology lets you give two units of red blood cells in one visit** to the American Red Cross. That means you may be helping twice as many people in less time than two whole blood donations.

When you make a double red cell donation, you're helping to meet the increasing demand for blood, ease chronic blood shortages, and increase the availability of high demand blood types.

Collecting two-for-one red cells can ensure that the red cells needed by patients come from fewer donors--thereby decreasing the possibility of transfusion reactions.

During a double red cell donation, blood is drawn from one arm and channeled through sterile, single-use tubing to an automated system. The system separates and collects the red cells, then returns the other blood components (platelets and plasma), plus 500 ml of saline, to you. Since you don't lose the liquid portion of your blood, some donors say they feel the same--or even better--than they do after a whole blood donation.

**Double red cell donations are as safe as a whole blood donation, and may be more comfortable to some donors** since the procedure uses a smaller needle. The procedure lasts a little longer than a whole blood donation (from 75 to 90 minutes) since it takes extra time to separate and collect red cells from other blood components.

Healthy people age 17 and older are generally eligible to make double red cell donations. Donors must also meet certain height, weight and iron level requirements. Men must weigh a minimum of 150 pounds and be at least 5'1". Women must weigh a minimum of 175 pounds and be at least 5'5". Both men and women must have an iron level of 40 percent.

Double red cell donors must wait 16 weeks or 112 days between donations--twice the waiting time for a whole blood donation.



**Your Double Red Cell donation allows you to give two units in one visit. You may be able to help twice as many people!**

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