

# Reasons to give

## Donating basics



**American Red Cross**

1-800-GIVE-LIFE | [redcrossmichigan.org](http://redcrossmichigan.org)

### Before you donate

- Determine if you meet the general requirements. Are you 17 or older? Do you weigh 110 pounds or more? Are you in good general health?
- Call the American Red Cross for information and an appointment.
- Ask what type of identification you will need to bring. Typically, the Red Cross will ask you to show your driver's license or a personal ID card from your business or school.

### When you arrive at the blood drive or donation center

- At sign-in, you will be asked to register by providing your name, address, phone number and other types of demographic information.
- You will also be asked to show your donor card or another type of positive identification.

### Pre-donation screening

- A Red Cross employee will ask you questions about your health, lifestyle and disease risk factors. All this information is confidential.
- Next, an employee will perform a short health exam, taking your pulse, temperature and blood pressure.
- A drop of blood from your finger will be tested to ensure your blood iron level is sufficient for you to donate. All medical equipment used for this test, as well as during the donation process, is sterile, used only once, and then disposed.

### Blood donation

- You will go to a donor bed where your arm will be cleaned with an antiseptic. A Red Cross professional will use a blood donation kit to draw blood from a vein in your arm. If you are allergic to iodine, be sure to tell the phlebotomist.
- You will give one unit of blood (about a pint), which takes about 6 to 10 minutes.

### Post donation

- After your donation, you will receive refreshments in the canteen area. You can stay there until you feel strong enough to leave.
- After donating, it's recommended that you increase your fluid intake for the next 24 to 48 hours; avoid strenuous physical exertions, heavy lifting or pulling with your donation arm for about five hours; avoid smoking and alcohol; and eat well-balanced meals for the next 24 hours.
- Donors seldom experience discomfort after giving, but if you feel light-headed, lie down until the feeling passes. If some bleeding occurs after removing the bandage, apply pressure to the site and raise your arm for three to five minutes. If bruising or bleeding appears under the skin, apply a cold pack periodically to the area during the first 24 hours, then warm, moist heat intermittently.
- If you have any questions about your donation or experience any unexpected problems, call the American Red Cross at the post-donation number provided to you at the blood drive.



**The need is constant. The gratification is instant. Give blood.™**