

BLOOD DONATION (THE GIFT OF LIFE) ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

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I think that with the past years events many more people than ever before are looking to donate blood. Many people are not sure if they are eligible to be a blood donor or not. Be aware that if you are making the donation for use during your own surgery the rules are less strict. Hopefully, this article will educate everyone on who can and cannot donate blood. General Guidelines (The below list is not all inclusive):

- #1- You must be healthy. This means that you feel well and can perform normal activities. If you have a chronic condition such as diabetes or high blood pressure, healthy means that you are being treated for this condition and the condition is under control. Blood pressure is considered under control if it is 180/100 or below. You are able to donate if you have been on insulin at least 2 weeks and are diabetic. You are not able to donate if since 1980 you received an injection of bovine (beef) insulin from the U.K.. If you have allergies, you may donate blood, as long as you have no fever and no problems breathing through your mouth. If you have seizures you may donate as long as you have been seizure-free for at least 3 months. If you have heart disease wait at least 6 months following angina episodes, heart attacks and bypass surgery or antioplasty. If you have a pacemaker you may donate if your pulse is between 50 - 100 beats per minute and only a small amount of irregular beats are noted.**
- #2- You must be at least 17 years old. There is no upper age limit.**
- #3- You must weigh at least 110 pounds.**
- #4- You must not have donated blood in the last 56 days.**
- #5- Your hemoglobin level must be adequate, at or above 12.5 g/dL. Your hematocrit level must be adequate, at or above 38%.**
- #6- Wait 2 days after finishing up antibiotics for an infection. You may be taking antibiotics and give blood if you are on the antibiotics to prevent an infection or if you are on antibiotics for acne.**
- #7- You may not donate if you have a temperature above 99.5 degrees farenheit. If you have a productive cough or feel unwell on the day of donation you are not eligible to donate.**
- #8- You may not donate if if you have some type of generalized autoimmune disease such as systemic lupus erythematosus or multiple sclerosis.**
- #9- Women taking birth control pills may donate blood.**
- #10- If your blood pressure tends to run low you should drink extra water before and after the donation.**
- #11- You must wait 12 months after receiving a blood transfusion from another person in the U.S.. You may not donate if you received a transfusion since 1980 in the U.K., Gibraltar or Falkland Islands (due to concerns about mad cow disease).**
- #12- If you have been treated with surgery or radition for cancer you may donate after**

5 years from treatment with no recurrent cancer. If your cancer was treated with chemotherapy, hormonal therapy or immunotherapy you are not eligible to donate.

If you had leukemia or lymphoma, including Hodgkins Disease you are not eligible to donate. If you had some skin cancers you may not require a waiting period of 5 years.

#13- You should not donate if your blood doesn't normally clot. You should not donate if you are on "blood thinners" such as coumadin or heparin. You may donate if you are on aspirin, however you must be off aspirin for at least 36 hours in order to donate platelets. You should discuss this with your physician and never go off a medication without their advance approval.

#14- Wait 12 months after using cocaine or other street drug through your nose before donating.

#15- You may not donate if you have hepatitis caused by a virus or unexplained jaundice (yellowing of the skin) since age 11. You may donate if your jaundice or hepatitis was caused by something other than viral such as medications, alcohol, trauma to the liver or bile duct obstruction. If you ever tested positive for hepatitis B or C you are not eligible. Wait 12 months after detention in a correctional institution or residence in a long-term psychiatric institution. Wait 12 months after close contact with someone sick with viral hepatitis.

#16- Wait 12 months after receiving a tattoo, being bitten by a human, if it broke the skin or after being exposed to another human's blood.

#17- Those who are at increased risk for HIV are not eligible. You are at increased risk if: you are a male who has had sex with another male since 1977, even once; you have ever used a needle, even once, to use drugs not prescribed by a doctor; you have taken clotting factor concentrates for a bleeding disorder; you have taken drugs or money in exchange for sex since 1977; you have ever had a positive test for HIV, you have symptoms of HIV including, unexplained weight loss, night sweats, blue or purple spots on or under the skin, long-lasting white spots or unusual sores in your mouth, lumps in your neck, armpits or groin that last more than one month, fever higher than 99 degrees that lasts more than 10 days, diarrhea lasting more than a month or persistent cough and shortness of breath.

Wait 12 months after close contact with someone who is at increased risk. This occurs when paying for sex, as a result of rape or when having sex with an IV drug user.

#18- You may donate if you were vaccinated for influenza, tetanus or meningitis. Wait 4 weeks after immunizations for German Measles, MMR and Chicken Pox. Wait 2 weeks after immunizations for Red Measles, Mumps, Polio, Small Pox and Yellow Fever.

Wait 7 days after immunization for hepatitis B, as long as you were not given the vaccine for exposure.

#19- May give after infectious mono has passed as long as you did not have hepatitis with the mono.

#20- You may donate 12 months after treatment ends for lyme disease. But you may

not donate if this is a chronic condition.

#21- Wait 3 years after being treated for malaria or moving to the U.S. from a country where malaria is found. Wait 12 months after returning from a trip to an area where malaria is found.

#22- You may donate if you use marijuana, as long as you are not under the influence at the time of the donation.

#23- Women may donate while on their period.

#24- Wait 12 months after receiving an organ or tissue transplant from another person.

#25- Persons who are pregnant are not eligible to donate. Wait 6 weeks after giving birth. Acceptable to donate if you are nursing or had an elective abortion.

#26- Wait 12 months after treatment for syphilis or gonorrhea.

#27- Wait until treatment is successfully treated if you have been diagnosed with tuberculosis.

**#28- There is a waiting period if you have been on the following medications:
Accutane, Proscar, Propecia, Arava, Chemo for conditions other than cancer,
Lupron for conditions other than cancer, Plavix, Soriatane, Tegison and
Ticlid.**

Information for this article was obtained from the American Red Cross. The American Red Cross can be found at www.redcross.org.