

Blood Donation

“..who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.” 1 Peter 1:1-3

Blood: the essence of life. It is created in our bone marrow. Blood carries vital oxygen to all parts of the body, fights infections, and helps stop bleeding. An average of one in ten patients who enter the hospital will need blood, but only about 3 out of 100 Americans give blood. According to the Red Cross, one pint of blood can save up to three lives. There is no substitute for blood—it cannot be created in a laboratory.

There are eight different types of blood, with 38% of all Americans having O positive, and only 1% with AB negative. Blood types need to be matched in most cases. However, those people with type O are called “universal donors,” because in case of an emergency, anyone can receive type O blood. And the small percentage of Americans with type AB are “universal recipients,” as they can accept any type of blood.

There is fear and misinformation out there in regard to blood donation, so learn the simple facts and consider giving a unique gift that can truly save a life.

It hurts: there is a small prick at first, but no pain while the blood is being collected.

I can get AIDS by giving or getting blood: only sterile materials are used when collecting blood, and donated blood is tested for 13 different conditions, including HIV and Hepatitis C. All donors are thoroughly screened, and must meet every safety requirement to give blood.

I need all my blood: Our bodies are quite adaptable. They will replace the actual fluid level within a couple hours, and the red blood cells in a few weeks. One pint of blood can safely be given every 56 days.

It takes too much time: From start to finish, a blood donation should take about an hour, including the screening and the juice and cookies afterward. The actual collection takes about 10 minutes.

Minimum requirements for blood donation are being 17 years of age, at least 110 pounds, and healthy. You want to eat regular meals and drink plenty of fluids before giving. Be prepared to answer health history questions each time you donate. All information is strictly confidential. Many factors can make you an unsuitable candidate for now, such as visiting a foreign country, a recent body piercing, or a cold. If you are turned down, don't be discouraged! With some time, you will probably qualify. Blood donors are not paid, removing any incentive to lie about medical conditions.

If you can't give blood and still want to help, there are many ways to do so. You can donate your assistance with blood drives or give money (while donating blood is free, there are many costs for the personnel, the actual collection, testing, storing, distributing, etc.)

You can even have some control over where your blood goes if you like. Family members could donate blood if their relative needs some, and if it is compatible, it will be used for that person. You can also ask that it be given to the military and it will go to the area of most critical need.

For more information:

www.redcross.org

www.aabb.org

Consider giving blood this month at Immanuel on October 15th.

Blessings, Nurse Karen