

What To Do To Prepare for Donating Blood

(The information below is taken from the Red Cross Blood Donation web site <http://www.redcrossblood.org/donating-blood/donation-process#t1>)

Know if You Are Eligible

To ensure the safety of blood donation for both donors and recipients, all volunteer blood donors must be evaluated to determine their eligibility to give blood. At the very least, donors must

Be healthy*

Be at least 17 years old in most states, or 16 years old with parental consent if allowed by state law –for information on donation if you are 16 years old, see link

<http://www.redcrossblood.org/students/sixteen>

Weigh at least 110 lbs.

Additional weight requirements apply for donors 18 years old and younger and all high school donors.

For additional information on eligibility requirements, see link

<http://www.redcrossblood.org/donating-blood/eligibility-requirements>

* *Note: Healthy means that you feel well and can perform normal activities. If you have a chronic condition such as diabetes, healthy also means that you are being treated and the condition is under control.*

Make an Appointment

It always helps us to know in advance when you are coming in to make a donation. Click on the following link below to access the appointment screen. The zip code location of the drive is 23507. The sponsor code is GHENT.

<http://www.redcrossblood.org/make-donation>

Hydrate

Be sure to drink plenty of fluids the day of your donation.

For More Information, Keep Going

Eat a Good Meal Before You Come

Eat a healthy meal before your donation. Avoid fatty foods, such as hamburgers, fries or ice cream before donating. Tests for infections done on all donated blood can be affected by fats that appear in your blood for several hours after eating fatty foods.



Wear Something Comfortable

Wear clothing with sleeves that can easily be rolled up above the elbow.

Maintain a Healthy Level of Iron in Your Diet Before Donating

If possible, include **iron-rich foods** in your diet, especially in the weeks before your donation. Click on this link to see a list of the foods:

<http://www.redcrossblood.org/learn-about-blood/health-and-wellness/iron-rich-foods>



Bring a List of Medications You Are Taking

We will need to know about any prescription and/or over the counter medications that may be in your system.

Bring an ID

Please bring either your donor card, driver's license or two other forms of identification.

Bring a Friend

Bring along a friend, so that you may both enjoy the benefits of giving blood.

During the Donation

Relax! Blood donation is a simple and very safe procedure so there is nothing to worry about.

Let the phlebotomist know if you have a preferred arm and show the staff any good veins that have been used successfully in the past to draw blood.

Listen to music, talk to other donors or read during the donation process.

Take the time to enjoy a snack and a drink in the refreshments area immediately after donating.

After the Donation

Drink plenty of fluids over the next 24-48 hours to replenish any fluids you lost during donation.

Avoid strenuous physical activity or heavy lifting for about five hours after donation.

If you feel light headed, lie down, preferably with feet elevated, until the feeling passes.

In rare cases when bleeding occurs after removing the bandage, apply pressure to the site and raise your arm for 3-5 minutes. If bleeding or bruising occurs under the skin, apply a cold pack to the area periodically during the first 24 hours.

If for any reason something doesn't feel right, call the American Red Cross toll-free number provided to you after your donation.

Enjoy the good feeling that comes with knowing that you may have saved as many as three lives