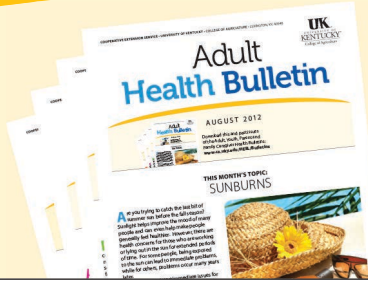


Adult Health Bulletin



JANUARY 2015

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: DONATING BLOOD

January is National Blood Donor Month. Have you ever donated blood? The American Red Cross, the largest blood collection organization in the United States, works across the nation to collect blood to help others in need. Every year, about 9.2 million people donate blood. It is estimated that about 20 percent of those volunteers are donating for the first time.

In the United States, approximately 41,000 units of blood are needed every day. The average transfusion needs around 3 pints of blood, but a person in a car accident may need as many as 100 pints of blood. Blood Type O is the most requested type of blood. People who have O-negative blood are considered to be universal donors; their blood can be used for people with any blood type. Unfortunately, only 7 percent of the people in the United States have this type of blood. Blood cannot be made by a manufacturer — it can only be donated — so donors of all blood types are needed.

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How does blood donation work?

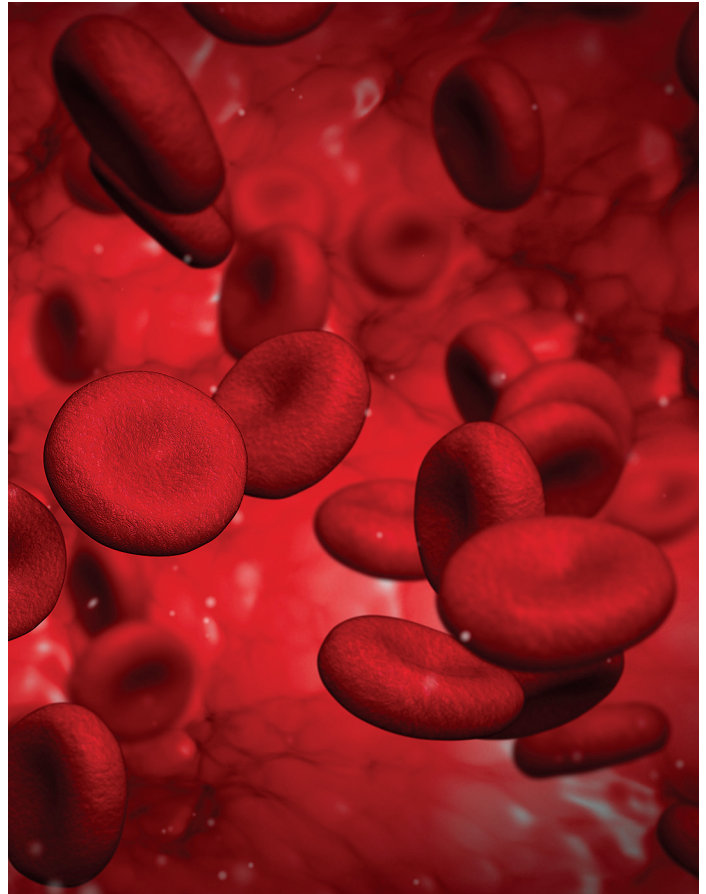
Donating blood is a great way to help others in need. There are 4 steps in the process:

- 1. Registration:** The beginning of the blood donation process includes checking in and filling out the necessary paperwork.
- 2. Medical history/ mini-physical:** Every donor reviews their medical history and is given a mini-physical to make sure it is safe to give blood. The mini-physical includes checking body temperature, blood pressure, pulse and hemoglobin level.
- 3. Donation:** This part usually takes no more than 10 to 12 minutes. The donation is usually about 1 pint of blood. (The average adult has approximately 10 pints.)
- 4. Refreshments:** While recovering from the donation there are various refreshments to drink and eat.

Any information shared during donations with the American Red Cross is kept confidential.

There are actually four different types of products from blood that can be used in transfusions: red blood cells, platelets, plasma, and cryoprecipitate. When a person donates blood usually two or three of these products are separated out. This is why one donation can help save multiple lives. Although the donation does have to be used rather quickly,

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most donated red blood cells have to be used within 42 days of collection. Platelets actually need to be used within 5 days. Both the plasma and the cryoprecipitate can be frozen and stored for use up to a year after donation.

The body is amazing. If a person has healthy bone marrow, whatever has been donated can be replaced with new blood. If you are able, donating blood can be a great way to give back to others in need. The main reason volunteers donate blood is to help others. January may be a great time for you to donate blood and help others.

SOURCES:

American Red Cross. Blood facts and Statistics.
<http://www.redcrossblood.org/learn-about-blood/blood-facts-and-statistics>

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Health Bulletin

Written by: Nicole Peritore
Edited by: Connee Wheeler
Designed by: Rusty Manseau
Stock images: 123RF.com

