



56 Facts about Blood and Blood Donation

(one for each day between your blood donations!)

1. 4.5 million Americans would die *each year* without life saving blood transfusions.
2. Approximately 32,000 pints of blood are used *each day* in the United States.
3. *Every three* seconds someone needs blood
4. One out of every 10 people entering a hospital needs blood.
5. Just one pint of donated blood can help save as many as three people's lives.
6. The average adult has 10 pints of blood in his or her body.
7. One unit of blood is roughly the equivalent of one pint.
8. Blood makes up about 7% of your body's weight.
9. A newborn baby has about one cup of blood in his or her body.
10. The average red blood cell transfusion is 3.4 pints.
11. Blood fights against infection and helps heal wounds, keeping you healthy.
12. There are four main blood types: A, B, AB and O. AB is the universal recipient and O negative is the universal donor.
13. Blood centers often run short of type O and B blood.
14. Shortages of all types of blood occur during the summer and winter holidays.
15. If all blood donors gave 2 to 4 times a year, it would help prevent blood shortages.
16. If you began donating blood at age 17 and donated every 56 days until you reached 76, you would have donated 48 gallons of blood.
17. About three gallons of blood supports the entire nation's blood needs for one minute.
18. Blood donation takes four steps: medical history, quick physical, donation, and snacks.
19. The actual blood donation usually takes less than 10 minutes. The entire process, from when you sign in to the time you leave, takes about 45 minutes.
20. Giving blood will not decrease your strength.
21. You cannot get AIDS or any other infectious disease by donating blood.
22. Fourteen tests, 11 of which are for infectious diseases, are performed on each unit of donated blood.
23. Any company, community organization, place of worship or individual may contact their local community blood center to host a blood drive.
24. People donate blood out of a sense of duty and community spirit, not to make money. They are not paid for their donation.
25. Much of today's medical care depends on a steady supply of blood from healthy donors.
26. One unit of blood can be separated into several components (red blood cells, white blood cells, plasma, platelets and cryoprecipitate).
27. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body's organs and tissue.
28. There are about one billion red blood cells in two to three drops of blood.
29. Red blood cells live about 120 days in the circulatory system.

30. Platelets help blood to clot and give those with leukemia and other cancers a chance to live.
31. Apheresis (ay-fur-ee-sis) is a special kind of blood donation that allows a donor to give specific blood components, such as platelets.
32. Donated red blood cells must be used within 42 days of collection.
33. Donated platelets must be used within five days of collection.
34. Plasma can be frozen and used for up to a year.
35. Plasma is a pale yellow mixture of water, proteins and salts.
36. Plasma, which is 90% water, constitutes 55% of blood volume.
37. Healthy bone marrow makes a constant supply of red cells, plasma and platelets.
38. People who have been in car accidents and suffered massive blood loss can need transfusions of 50 pints or more of red blood cells.
39. The average bone marrow transplant requires 120 units of platelets and about 20 units of red blood cells. Patients undergoing bone marrow transplants need platelets donations from about 120 people and red blood cells from about 20 people.
40. Severe burn victims can need 20 units of platelets during their treatment.
41. Children being treated for cancer, premature infants, and children having heart surgery need blood and platelets from donors of all types.
42. Anemic patients need blood transfusions to increase their iron levels.
43. Cancer, transplant and trauma patients and patients undergoing open-heart surgery require platelet transfusions to survive.
44. Sickle cell disease is an inherited disease that affects more than 80,000 people in the United States, 98% of whom are of African descent. Some patients with complications from severe sickle cell disease receive blood transfusions every month – up to 4 pints at a time.
45. In the days following the September 11 attacks, a half a million people donated blood.
46. Females receive 53% of blood transfused; males receive 47%.
47. 94% of all blood donors are registered voters.
48. 60% of the US population is eligible to donate – only 5% do on a yearly basis.
49. 17% of non-donors cite “never thought about it” as the main reason for not giving, while 15% say they’re “too busy.” The #1 reason donors say they give is because they “want to help others.”
50. After donating blood, you replace these red blood cells within 3 to 4 weeks. It takes eight weeks to restore the iron lost after donating.
51. Granulocytes, a type of white blood cell, roll along blood vessel walls in search of bacteria to eat.
52. White cells are the body's primary defense against infection.
53. There is no substitute for human blood.
54. It's about *Life*
55. Since a pint is pound, you lose a pound every time you donate blood.
56. Anyone who is in good health, is at least 17 years old, and weighs at least 110 pounds may donate blood every **56** days.

