

# The Donation Process



**American  
Red Cross**

**Giving whole blood is simple.** The donation process, from the time you arrive until the time you leave, takes about an hour. The donation itself is only about 10 minutes. And the satisfaction you get from knowing you've helped change a life? Timeless.

## Step 1: Registration

- You will read information about donating blood.
- You will be asked to complete a form with demographic and basic health information.
- You will be asked to show an American Red Cross donor card or positive ID.

## Step 2: Health history and mini physical

- A trained staff person will ask you some health history questions during a private and confidential interview.
- You will have your temperature, iron level, blood pressure and pulse checked to protect your health and well-being.

## Step 3: Donation

- Staff will cleanse an area on your arm and insert a needle for the blood drawing procedure.
- The actual process of donating blood takes approximately 7-10 minutes.
- When about a pint of blood has been collected, the staff will remove the needle and place a bandage on your arm.

## Step 4: Refreshments

- You will spend a few minutes enjoying refreshments so your body can adjust to the slight decrease in fluid volume.
- Enjoy the feeling of knowing you've done something good.

**Before you give:** Get a good night's sleep, have a good breakfast or lunch, drink extra water and fluids (but avoid tea, coffee or caffeinated beverages), eat iron-rich foods like fortified cereals and broccoli, and avoid fatty foods like hamburgers, fries or ice cream.

**While you give:** Wear clothing with sleeves that can be raised above the elbow, show the staff "good veins" that have been used to draw blood in the past, and don't forget to relax.

**After you give:** Enjoy a snack and drink in our refreshment area. Drink plenty of fluids in the next 24 to 48 hours, avoid strenuous physical activity or heavy lifting for about five hours, and eat a well-balanced meal.

**Remember:** Donors seldom experience discomfort after giving, but if you feel light-headed, lie down until the feeling goes away. If bleeding occurs after you take off your bandage, apply pressure to the site and raise your arm until the bleeding stops. If bruising or bleeding appears under the skin, apply a cold pack. And if for any reason, something doesn't feel right, call the post-donation number at 1-866-236-3276.

**Wear your badge of honor proudly! You've earned it!**

