



COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PLATELET DONATION

What are platelets?

Platelets are an important component of blood because they are a critical part of the clotting process. They prevent or stop bleeding and are life-saving therapy for patients undergoing chemotherapy for cancer treatment, leukemia, bone marrow transplants, organ transplants and open heart surgery. Children undergoing therapy for cancer and leukemia often need platelets. Due to recent advances in the treatment of these illnesses, the demand for platelets is growing dramatically. Through our state-of-the-art technology, we can collect individual platelet products and meet the growing needs of local hospitals and patients. That's why we depend on our platelet apheresis heroes.

Who Can Donate Platelets?

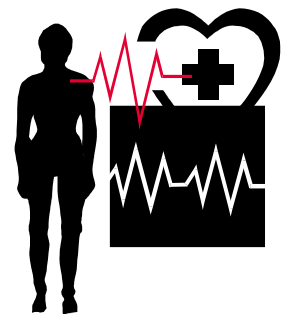
Almost anyone can be a platelet donor. The qualifications are the same as for whole blood donations. Through a process called apheresis (pronounced ay-fuh-REE-sis), or plateletpheresis, which is a technique of selectively withdrawing a single component of blood, you can donate platelets. Since platelets only have a shelf life of five days, the hospitals demand for them is constant. That's why we depend on our platelet apheresis heroes.

Why can't a large amount of platelets be collected during a regular blood donation?

Platelet donation allows the collection of a large quantity of platelets from a single donor. The specialized technology separates and collects just the platelets and returns the red cells and plasma to the donor. To equal the quantity of one platelet donation, we would have to combine or "pool" the platelets from six different whole blood donations from six different donors.

How is a platelet donation different from a whole blood donation?

- Only specific locations have the specialized equipment to collect platelets. Platelets are not collected at blood drives.
- Donating platelets is a very safe procedure. Sterile, single-use collection kits and needles are used once, just for you, and then discarded.
- You can donate platelets up to 24 times a year compared to 6 times a year for whole blood.
- Because it takes more time to separate and collect the platelets from the other components in your blood, the donation takes approximately 90 minutes. The entire process, including paperwork and health history, usually takes about 2 hours.
- Platelet donors can not have taken any aspirin or aspirin products for 48 hours before their donation.
- You feel no different from donating whole blood, and are instructed to return to your normal (not strenuous) activities. Dizziness and fainting are very uncommon with platelet donors



What Can I Do While Donating Platelets?

Plenty. All of our locations have comfortable contour chairs and televisions. Donors can watch a movie or watch television, and in some instances, enjoy snacks, talk on their cell phone, use their laptop, read, or simply sit back and relax.

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Can I continue donating whole blood and be an apheresis donor?

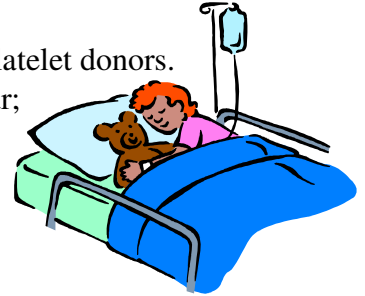
YES! We have several donors that donate both whole blood and platelets. Due to the difference in donation frequency guidelines, donors can arrange to fit both types of donations in their schedule.

What's needed more - Whole Blood or Platelets?

BOTH!! There is an equal need for both blood and platelets. However, since there are fewer locations for platelet donations, there is a smaller donor base and a stronger need to recruit new donors.

Did you know?

- Platelets have a shelf life of **only 5 days**, so there is a constant need for platelet donors.
- Whole blood donors are eligible every 56 days or about 6 donations a year; platelet donors can donate up to 24 times a year.
- Donors can donate platelets within 3 days of a whole blood donation.
- Your body replaces your platelets in about 24 hours.



How often can I donate platelets?

Up to 24 times a year! Due to the flexibility of platelet donation, many donors create their own schedules. We have some donors that donate twice a month, once a month, once a year, or whenever they can. And every donation is appreciated!!! Most donor locations are open Monday-Saturday, and alternating Sundays. Also we have evening and early morning appointments, depending on the day. Please call your closest donor location for schedule information.

There is a tremendous need for platelet donors. This year alone, patients in New England (Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont & Connecticut) will require over **60,000** apheresis platelet units as an essential part of their treatment so they can have another chance at life. We hope you will consider visiting one of our donor locations and donate platelets.

For more information about donating platelets, please contact a location near you or call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543)

180 Rustcraft Road
Dedham, MA 02026
(800) 462-9400 x2003

99 Rosewood Drive
Danvers, MA 01923
(978) 646-9434 x11

381 Plantation Street
Worcester, MA 01605
(508) 791-7444 x116

3500 Main Street
Springfield, MA 01107
(800) 462-2229 x931
(413) 785-0931

209 Farmington Avenue
Farmington, CT 06032
(860) 678-2749

425 Reservoir Avenue
Manchester, NH 03104
(800) 262-2660 x126

32 North Prospect Street
Burlington, VT 05401
(800) 843-3500

524 Forest Avenue
Portland, ME 04101
(800) 272-2114
(207) 775-2114

300 Main Street
Central Maine Medical Center
Lewiston, ME 04240
(800) 272-2114 / (207) 775-2114

170 Forbes Road
Braintree, MA 02184
(781) 794-1800 ext 0

25 Stuart Street
Boston, MA 02116
(617) 556-2200 ext 0

275 New State Highway, Rt. 44
Raynham, MA 02767
(508) 977-0201 ext 0

