



Carter BloodCare Fact Sheet

Updated, December 2021

Saving Lives is in Your Blood

Facts on Donating to Help Communities in Need

Your blood is an amazing, one-of-a-kind resource.

As you circulate about your day, it circulates about your body. It cannot be manufactured or made in a lab. It's a vital, lifesaving force that's crucial for your health and, when you donate it, the lives of others who depend on you.

How incredible is your blood? Here's a look.

It's in Your Blood: A Few Facts

There are 10 - 12 pints of blood in the human body, but only one pint is needed each time you donate.

Blood makes up about 7% of your body's weight.

One unit of blood can be separated into red blood cells, white blood cells, plasma and platelets.

Just two to three drops of blood contain 1 billion red blood cells.

Where does it all come from? You can thank your healthy bone marrow for making a constant supply of blood components with different but crucial functions:

- Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body's organs and tissues.
- White blood cells protect the body from infection.
- Plasma – which is 90% water and makes up 55% of blood volume – keeps your blood cells, nutrients, antibodies and proteins moving.
- Platelets help form clots to prevent excess blood loss.

What's Your Type?

A, B, AB and O are the four main blood types. AB is the universal recipient, while O negative is the universal donor.

The blood types by percentage of the population, from most to least common, are:

O+	38%
A+	34%
B+	8%
O-	6.6%
A-	6%
AB+	3%
B-	less than 2%
AB-	less than 1%

An Urgent Need: How Giving Blood Helps

Someone needs blood every three seconds.

In the United States, 32,000 pints of donated blood are used each day.

Three lives can be saved by one pint of donated blood.

Each year, 4.5 million American lives are saved through blood transfusions.

More than 17.9 million blood transfusions occur in the United States every year.

Women receive 53% of blood transfusions; men receive 47%.

About 1 in 7 hospital patients needs blood. More than 5% and as much as 15% of all hospitalizations require blood transfusion, making it one of the most frequently performed procedures in U.S. hospitals.

Vehicle accident and blood loss victims can require transfusions of 50 pints or more of red blood cells.

Bone marrow transplant patients need platelet donations from about 120 people and red blood cells from about 20 people.

Severe burn victims can need 20 units of platelets during treatment.

Children being treated for cancer, premature infants, and children having heart surgery need blood and platelets from donors of all types.

Red blood cells can be used to help accident victims, surgical patients, and people with anemia.

Platelets can be used by patients receiving treatment for leukemia and cancer, those undergoing open-heart surgery, and others with low-platelet conditions.

Plasma is effective in treating patients with burns, trauma, certain blood disorders, and a variety of other blood conditions.

Sickle cell disease is an inherited disease that affects more than 80,000 Americans, 98% of whom are of African descent. Some patients with complications from severe sickle cell disease receive blood transfusions every month, up to four pints at a time.

Who Gives Blood?

Healthy adults who are at least 17 years old – or 16 with parental consent in Texas – and weigh at least 110 pounds may donate whole blood every 56 days.

The U.S. blood supply is almost entirely dependent on volunteer donors and a network of 66 federally regulated non-profit blood centers, in addition to numerous hospital-based collection centers.

In a recent survey of the potential donor pool, with donor eligibility applied to an estimated U.S. population of 327 million, 62.6% of Americans were regarded as eligible to donate blood. However, less than 5% donated.

High school blood donations represent at least 17% and as much as 20% of the national blood supply.

The top reason donors say they give is because they "want to help others."

Blood donors make their voices heard: 94% are registered voters.

If you begin giving blood at 17 years old and donate every 56 days until you're 79, you will donate more than 46 gallons.

Donation Data

Actual blood donation usually takes less than 10 minutes. The entire process from the time you sign in to the time you leave takes about an hour.

Currently, 14 tests – including 11 for infectious diseases – are performed on each unit of donated blood.

Apheresis is an automated donation process that allows a donor to give specific blood components, such as platelets, while returning the other blood components to the donor.

The need for blood components is constant. The shelf life of donated platelets is five days; for donated red blood cells, it's 42 days. The shelf life of frozen plasma is one year.

The blood volume lost during donation is replaced by the body within two to three days.

COVID-19 significantly disrupted scheduled blood drives, with a 30% reduction from March 2020 to October 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. The pandemic forced a shift in collection activities from blood drives at locations within communities – such as schools, businesses and churches – to fixed-site locations, such as Carter BloodCare's donor centers.

Carter BloodCare: On a Mission to Save Lives by Making Transfusion Possible

Carter BloodCare provides transfusion services to nearly 200 medical facilities in more than 50 counties of north, central and east Texas.

Carter BloodCare delivers more than 450,000 blood products annually to meet hospitals' needs for their patients.

Carter BloodCare has 25 donor centers.

On average, the Carter BloodCare team holds 30 mobile blood drives daily.

To keep up with community blood needs, Carter BloodCare must see between 1,100 and 1,500 donors every day.

Making an appointment to give blood is easy: Call or text 1-800-366-2864, or visit carterbloodcare.org to find a donor center or blood drive near you.