

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT DONATING BLOOD

Who Can Donate Blood?

Family members, friends and the community are encouraged to donate whole blood and platelets for MD Anderson Cancer Center patients. Thank you for wanting to donate with MD Anderson Blood Bank. Please read the requirements below to ensure you are eligible to donate.

General Donor Requirements

- All Donors: Please provide a personal photo ID (state issued Driver's License or ID, passport, military ID, work ID, school ID, green card or work visa)
- Age: At least 17 years of age and there is no upper age limit
- Weight: Minimum of 110 lbs.
- Be hydrated prior to donating
- Eat a sensible meal within 4 hours prior to donation
- Be in good general health at the time of donation

Common Eligibility Questions

- Tattoo or skin piercing: **OK if performed in a state licensed facility** more than 2 weeks prior to donating, if not, wait one year
- Travel: You cannot donate if you have traveled in the past year to an area that is considered to be high risk for malaria as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Cancer: Only acceptable types are basal cell carcinoma of the skin and carcinoma in-situ of the cervix
- Diabetes: OK to donate
- Pregnancy: OK to donate six weeks after end of pregnancy
- Antibiotics: Not currently/actively taking, **OK** if taking for acne, skin/nail and local yeast infections
- Blood transfusion: Deferred 1 year from the date of the transfusion
- immunizations/ vaccinations: most OK including flu & tetanus

- Have ever had cancer, other than basal cell carcinoma of the skin or in situ carcinoma of the cervix
- Hemophilia
- Have ever used intravenous (IV) illegal drugs, *even once*
- Are a man who has had sexual contact with another man since 1977, *even once*
- Have ever had a positive test for the HIV/AIDS virus
- Have ever had hepatitis (after the age of 11)
- Have any of the following symptoms, which are associated with AIDS:
 - Unexplained recent weight loss of more than 10 pounds in less than two months
 - Unexplained sweating, especially at night
 - Fever higher than 99° for more than a week
 - Swollen glands; enlarged lymph nodes in the neck, armpit or groin, with or without pain
 - Pink, blue or purple flat or raised spots or lumps on or under the skin and mucous membranes. They may look like bruises, but they don't go away
 - White patches in the mouth (thrush)
 - Persistent cough or shortness of breath
 - Persistent diarrhea