

Blood Donation Myths

Myth: Health deteriorates after donating blood.

FACT: If you are healthy prior to donation, your recovery is complete in a day or two. It is advised to rest a while after donating. Drinking enough liquids replaces the lost fluid within a couple of hours. The body produces new cells faster after a donation. All the RBCs are replaced within 3-4 days and WBCs within 3 weeks.

Myth: Taking medication means that one cannot be a blood donor.

FACT: Depending on the medication being taken, it may halt donation for a period, though in many cases it won't prevent a donation. person in charge or the nursing staff should be informed before donating.

Myth: Giving blood hurts.

FACT: The pain experienced is no more than a needle prick. The slight soreness that maybe where the needle was is just a reminder of the good deed done.

Myth: Age is a deterrent to blood donation.

FACT: There is no maximum age limit. As long as you are fit and healthy you can give blood.

Myth: You cannot take part in sports or other physical activities after donating blood.

FACT: Giving blood does not interfere with ability to perform physically. Advice to avoid heavy lifting or strenuous workouts for the rest of the day is given after the donation. You can get back on track the next day.

Myth: Giving blood is time consuming.

FACT: The time taken for a single donation session is normally not more than an hour.

Myth: Being a vegetarian, means that the blood does not have enough iron and cannot be donated.

FACT: Vegetarians can donate blood. The iron needed is taken from body stores and once a balanced diet is maintained is replaced after donation. This usually normally takes a month or so.

Blood Donation **Myths** cont.

Myth: HIV or other infections can be contracted from donating blood.

FACT: A clear procedure exists for taking blood from each donor. Sterility is maintained at all steps. A sterile, new needle is used for each donation and is then properly discarded. Use of sterile equipment and technique limits the chance of infection.

Myth: There is limited blood in the body and it is unhealthy to give some away.

FACT: Only about 350-450ml of blood is taken during a donation session. There is enough blood in the body to donate it without any ill effects. The body makes new blood after donation.

Myth: Heavy people are healthier and have more blood give.

FACT: Being overweight makes people less healthy. Overweight people do not have more blood.

Myth: When there is a requirement, blood can be manufactured.

FACT: Blood is not something that can be manufactured. It can only come from healthy human beings.

Myth: Being of mixed race precludes blood from being helpful.

FACT: Race and caste have no bearing on eligibility being a blood donor. It is the blood type and group that is of importance.

Myth: Blood donation can tell if one is HIV positive.

FACT: HIV antibodies can take months to develop after infection with the virus. Those recently infected may have a negative test result and yet be able to infect others. It is better not to donate blood if at risk of getting HIV or other infections.