

BLOOD FACTS

- On any given day, an average of 38,000 units of red blood cells are needed for hospital patients in the United States.
- One in 10 people entering a hospital needs blood.
- Approximately 38 percent of the population is eligible to donate blood. Of those eligible, only a small percentage actually give blood.
- In the United States, someone needs a blood transfusion about every two seconds.
- The average adult body contains 10-12 pints of blood. A newborn baby has about one cup of blood in his or her body.
- There are about one billion red blood cells in two to three drops of blood.
- Red blood cells must be transfused within 42 days.
- There is no substitute for human blood. It cannot be manufactured.
- Almost everyone will know someone who needs blood.
- Blood is often needed for traumas, heart surgeries, joint-replacement surgeries, organ transplants, premature babies, leukemia and cancer treatments, and much more.
- People in car accidents who suffer massive blood loss may require transfusions of more than 50 pints of red blood cells.

NUTRITION *and* IRON *in your blood.*

Good nutrition is important in everyone's life - especially to a blood donor - and iron is a major ingredient to good nutrition. At the blood collection site, your blood will be checked to determine if your red cells are adequate for donation. Red Cross iron level requirements are followed to make sure you can spare a pint of blood. The requirements also mean each patient receives an iron-rich transfusion.

Iron is one of the body's most important elements. It is needed in small but vital amounts. Iron combines with protein to make hemoglobin, the red substance in the blood that carries oxygen from the lungs to body cells and removes carbon dioxide from those cells.

Your iron level changes constantly depending on your food intake and your physical activity level. Not passing this test does not mean you are unhealthy. Modifying your eating habits to include iron-rich foods should enable you to donate soon.

• ***Iron-Rich Foods:*** Red meat, oysters, clams, soybeans, dried beans, peas and lentils, whole grain cereals and breads, as well as prunes and dried fruits, are excellent sources of iron!

• ***Combine Foods Rich in Vitamin C with Foods Rich in Iron:*** Vitamin C helps the body absorb iron. It can be found in citrus fruits/juices, kiwi, cantaloupe, strawberries, broccoli, tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, cabbage, spinach and leafy greens such as turnip, beet and collard greens.

• ***Drink Water — Avoid Coffee and Tea:*** Tannins in coffee and tea can block the absorption of iron. Drinking lots of water has countless benefits.