



**American
Red Cross**

Blood Services
New York-Penn Region

Blood Donor Eligibility Guide

Thanks for Volunteering to Give Blood!

Please review these guidelines before making an appointment to donate blood. These guidelines are subject to change as federal regulations and advanced information become available.

Ver. October 2005

Age

- Minimum age 16 (NY residents only with parent/guardian written consent on American Red Cross consent form)
- Minimum age 17 (double red cell, apheresis & PA residents)
- 76 or older needs medical director approval

AIDS

Do not give blood to get an AIDS test. Please see your own doctor or local health department to get tested. We are required to report all positive HIV results to public health officials. For anonymous HIV test sites, call the NYS AIDS Hotline at 1-800-541-AIDS or the PA Department of Health AIDS Factline at 1-800-662-6080.

Do not give blood if you are at risk for getting and spreading the AIDS virus. You are at risk if you:

- have ever had a positive test for the HIV/AIDS virus
- have ever used needles to take drugs, steroids, or anything not prescribed by your doctor
- have ever used clotting factor concentrates for a bleeding disorder such as hemophilia
- have received money, drugs, or other payment for sex since 1977
- are a male who had sexual contact with another male, even once, since 1977
- have AIDS or any of its symptoms, which include:
 - unexplained weight loss (10 pounds or more in less than 2 months)
 - night sweats
 - blue or purple spots in your mouth or skin
 - lumps in your neck, armpits, or groin, lasting longer than one month
 - long-lasting white spots or unusual sores in your mouth
 - persistent cough that won't go away and shortness of breath
 - diarrhea lasting longer than one month
 - fever higher than 100.5 F lasting more than 10 days
 - have had sex with any person described above in the last 12 months

- or your sexual partner were born in or lived in Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Niger, or Nigeria for five years or more after 1977
- if you received blood transfusions or medical treatment with a blood product in any of these countries since 1977

Allergy

- Defer temporarily if breathing difficulty is present

Asthma

- Accept if no breathing difficulty at the time of donation and no limitations or restrictions in normal daily activities (e.g. can climb a flight of stairs without shortness of breath)

Blood Pressure

- Accept with or without medications if blood pressure is within American Red Cross limits on day of donation

Blood Transfusion

- Defer for 12 months
- Defer indefinitely for blood transfusion received in the U.K. since 1980
- Defer indefinitely for blood transfusion or treatment with a blood product received in Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Niger, or Nigeria since 1977

Cancer

- Accept:
 - In-situ cancer – treated and healed
 - Squamous or basal cell skin cancer – treated and healed
 - Non-cancerous skin lesions removed for cosmetic purposes

- Other types of cancer – treatment completed more than 5 years ago with no recurrence
 - Defer:
 - Unknown type of cancer
 - Hodgkin’s disease
 - Lymphoma
 - Kaposi’s sarcoma
 - Leukemia
 - Multiple myeloma
 - Mycosis fungoides
 - Polycythemia rubra vera
 - Non-melanoma skin cancer not treated, not healed or requires more treatment
 - Skin lesions removed for diagnostic purposes and biopsy results are pending
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Cold, Flu, or Sore Throat

- Defer temporarily for active cold or flu symptoms such as fever, moderate to severe sore throat, productive cough and/or just not feeling well on day of donation
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Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (CJD)

- Defer indefinitely if any of your blood relatives had CJD
 - Also see “Travel Outside U.S.” section
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Dental

- Accept following teeth cleaning, scaling, root canal, fillings and extraction, if no infection present
 - Defer 3 days for oral surgery
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Diabetes

- Defer indefinitely if received bovine (beef) insulin made from cattle from the U. K., Eastern Europe, or Western Europe
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Donation Intervals (for whole blood)

- Accept every 8 weeks (or 56 days)
 - Accept 112 days after routine double red cell procedure
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Double Red Cell Donation

- Accept:
 - male \geq 150 lbs and \geq 5’1” tall with Hct of \geq 40% (Not acceptable if participating in strenuous, competitive sports or actively training)
 - female \geq 175 lbs and \geq 5’5” tall with Hct of \geq 40% (Females in High School not eligible due to high risk of iron deficiency)
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Heart Disease/Surgery

- Evaluated individually
 - Must have no restrictions on physical activity and be symptom-free
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- Donors taking medications for heart disease (except for aspirin or anti-platelet medications) must be individually evaluated
 - 6-month deferral after heart attack if above criteria met
 - 6-month deferral from last episode of non-diagnosed heart-related chest pain
 - Accept musculoskeletal (non-cardiac) chest pain
 - Accept pacemaker if pulse and above criteria met
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Hemoglobin/Hematocrit

- Each donor’s hemoglobin/hematocrit is tested at the blood collection site
 - If deferred, deferral is only temporary and donor may try again (Note: Hematocrit deferral letter that is provided to donor at time of deferral encourages a healthy diet that includes iron rich foods for two months before repeated donation attempt.)
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Hepatitis/Unexplained Jaundice

- Defer indefinitely
 - for viral hepatitis/yellow jaundice or liver disease of unknown origin on or after age 11
 - for Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV) or mononucleosis at any age
 - if you have ever used needles to take drugs, steroids, or anything not prescribed by your doctor
 - Defer
 - if you had a confirmed positive HBsAg, repeat reactive anti-HCV, or anti HBc at any age
 - Accept
 - if you had non-infectious hepatitis or yellow jaundice associated with birth, medications, alcohol, bile duct obstruction, or fatty liver
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Hepatitis Exposure

- Defer 12 months
 - for living with a person who is/was sick with hepatitis in the previous 12 months (Living is defined as residency in the same dwelling. Examples: house, dormitory, apartment)
 - for sharing toothbrush or razor with a person who has viral hepatitis with symptoms or is a chronic carrier of hepatitis B
 - for someone who has been in juvenile detention, lockup, jail or prison for more than 72 consecutive hours during previous 12 months including individuals who are permitted to leave the correctional institution temporarily (work release programs)
 - following blood transfusion, blood injections, tattoo, non-sterile needle stick/body piercing, or non-sterile Teflon body modifications, or blood contact with open wound, non-intact skin or mucous membrane
 - following human bite or a bite from a primate that resulted in a wound which broke the skin
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- Accept
 - casual contact (no contact with blood or body fluid)
 - healthcare workers working with hepatitis/HIV positive patients providing
 - there is no contact with blood through non-sterile, percutaneous inoculation (needle stick), an open wound, non-intact skin or mucous membrane
 - sterile ear or body piercing, Botox injections, sterile acupuncture, or sterile electrolysis

Immunizations/Vaccinations

- Defer 7 days for
 - Hepatitis B vaccine when given for protection and not exposure (for exposure, see “Hepatitis Exposure” section)
- Defer 2 weeks for
 - Red Measles (Rubeola), Mumps, Oral Polio, and Yellow Fever vaccine
- Defer 4 weeks for
 - German Measles (Rubella)
 - MMR (Measles, Mumps & Rubella)
 - Chicken Pox vaccine (Varivax®)
- Defer 8 weeks for
 - Smallpox vaccine
- Defer 12 months from
 - last dose of experimental/unlicensed vaccine if participating in a research or rabies vaccine for exposure study (i.e. Varivax® Study)
 - last dose of rabies vaccine unless received for prevention only (no exposure)
- Accept
 - Hepatitis A vaccine if received for prevention only (no exposure)
 - most other immunizations/vaccinations (e.g. flu, tetanus, meningitis – not exposure related) providing donor is symptom-free and fever-free

Infectious Mononucleosis

- Defer for occurrence at any age

Malaria

- Defer 3 years after last symptom/treatment
- See “Travel Outside of U.S.” section

Medications

- Defer for 3 days
 - Aspirin (for plateletpheresis donation only)
- Defer for 7 days
 - Coumadin® (warfarin), or longer depending upon underlying medical condition
 - Heparin, or longer depending upon underlying medical condition

- Clopidogrel®, Plavix®, Ticlid®, or Ticlopidine® (for plateletpheresis donation only)
- Defer for 1 month
 - Proscar® or Propecia® (finasteride)
 - Accutane®, Amnesteem®, Claravis® or Sotret® (isotretinoin)
- Defer for 6 months
 - Avodart® (dutasteride)
- Defer 12 months
 - Hepatitis B Immune Globulin (HBIG) when given following exposure to Hepatitis B
- Defer for 3 years
 - Soriatane® (acitretin)
- Defer for 5 years
 - Radioactive seed implant
- Defer indefinitely
 - Gonadotropin derived from human pituitary gland
 - Growth hormone of unknown derivation or derived from human pituitary gland
 - Thyrotropin (thyroid-stimulating hormone, TSH) derived from human pituitary gland
 - Insulin from cows (bovine, or beef, insulin manufactured in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Gibraltar, Isle of Man, Channel Islands, Falkland Islands), or unknown source
 - Tegison® (etretinate)
- Accept
 - Antibiotics, if course of medication is complete (last dose taken) and donor is symptom-free
 - Anti-fungal agents (oral or topical) taken for vaginal, skin, or nail infection, or ringworm. Other reasons require medical evaluation.
 - Tamoxifen®, if taken to prevent cancer
 - Anti-viral agents taken for cold sores, genital herpes, genital warts, or shingles. Other reasons require medical evaluation.

Organ/Tissue Transplants

- Defer 12 months for
 - cornea transplant
 - kidney transplant (recovered without restriction and not on anti-rejection medications)
 - human bone (including dental powder) or skin graft, tissue transplant when the source is other than the donor
- Defer indefinitely for
 - dura mater transplant/graft from human source other than the donor
 - organ transplant (liver, heart, lung, liver-pancreas, intestine, heart-lung)
- Accept
 - autologous (donor’s own) bone or skin graft or tissue transplant

Pregnancy

- Defer while pregnant
- Defer temporarily
 - while taking fertility drugs and may be or not sure if pregnant
- Defer 6 weeks
 - after uncomplicated third trimester or term delivery or caesarean section
 - after third trimester miscarriage
- Accept
 - nursing mothers
 - while taking fertility drugs and is NOT pregnant
 - after first or second trimester fetal loss

Serious Illness

- Evaluated individually
- Defer indefinitely for
 - Multiple Sclerosis
 - Chagas disease
 - Babesiosis

Sickle Cell

- Defer indefinitely for
 - sickle cell disease
- Accept for
 - sickle cell trait

Skin Disease/Rash

- Evaluated individually
- Phlebotomy site must be free of rash/skin disease

Surgery

- Accept with history of recent surgery if
 - underlying illness does not disqualify donor
 - stitches/staples dissolved or removed
 - wound is healed
 - donor has resumed normal activity and is feeling well
- Accept
 - minor cuts requiring stitches/staples and no inflammation or infection

Syphilis/Gonorrhea

- Defer for 12 months from
 - date of positive test, clinical symptoms and/or treatment for gonorrhea
 - History of syphilis requires evaluation. Documentation of treatment may be required.

Travel Outside of U.S.

- Defer 12 months for travel to
 - a malarial risk area (malarial risk information – <http://www.cdc.gov.travel.regionalmalaria>)
 - Iraq
- Defer for 3 years from date of departure if you
 - resided in a risk country or in a non-risk area within a malarial risk country (Residence: presence in a country for ≥ 5 years)
- Defer indefinitely if you
 - spent a total of 3 months or more in the U.K. (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands, Gibraltar, Falkland Islands) from 1/1/1980 – 12/31/1996
 - spent a total of 6 months or more on or associated with a U.S. military base in Belgium, Netherlands (Holland) or Germany from 1/1/1980 – 12/31/1990
 - spent a total of 6 months or more on or associated with a U.S. military base in Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Italy or Greece from 1/1/1980 – 12/31/1996
 - or your sexual partner were born in or lived in Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Niger, or Nigeria for five years or more after 1977
- Accept if you
 - traveled to a non-risk area of a malarial risk country and are free of unexplained symptoms suggestive of malaria

Weight

- Minimum weight 110 lbs.
- If you weigh 350 lbs. or more, please contact a Red Cross Supervisor

Eligibility criteria is subject to change. For the most current information, please refer to www.donatebloodnow.org/donateblood/eligible.asp, or call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE to speak with a representative.



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