

56 Blood Facts

Check out Carter BloodCare's 56 Fascinating Blood Facts!

1. Healthy adults who are at least 17 years old (16 with parental consent in Texas) and weigh at least 110 pound may donate whole blood every 56 days.
2. 4.5 million American lives are saved each year by blood transfusions.
3. 32,000 pints of donated blood are used each day in the United States.
4. Someone needs blood every three seconds.
5. About 1 in 7 hospital patients needs blood.
6. Three lives are saved by one pint of donated blood.
7. 10 - 12 pints: amount of blood in the human body.
8. One unit of blood is roughly the equivalent of one pint.
9. Blood makes up about 7% of your body's weight.
10. A newborn baby has about one cup of blood in his body.
11. 2.7 pints: the average whole blood and double-red-blood-cell transfusion.
12. Blood fights infection and helps heal wounds.
13. A, B, AB and O are the four main types of blood types. AB is the universal recipient, O negative is the universal donor.
14. Blood centers often run short of types O and B blood.
15. Shortages of all blood types happen during the summer and winter holidays.
16. The average blood donor gives about twice per year.
17. 46.5 gallons: amount of blood you could donate if you began at 17 and donate every 56 days until you reach 79 years old.
18. Three gallons of blood is used every minute in the United States.
19. There are four steps to donating blood: medical history, quick physical, donation and snacks.
20. The actual blood donation usually takes less than ten minutes. The entire process from the time you sign in to the time you leave takes about an hour.
21. Giving blood will not decrease your strength.
22. You cannot get AIDS or any other infectious disease by donating blood.
23. 14 tests (11 for infectious diseases) are performed on each unit of donated blood.
24. Any company, community organization, place of worship or individual may contact their local community blood center to host a blood drive.
25. People donate blood out of a sense of duty and community spirit, not to make money. They are not paid for their donation.

56 Blood Facts Cont.

26. Much of today's medical care depends on a steady supply of blood from healthy donors.
27. One unit of blood can be separated into red blood cells, white blood cells, plasma, platelets and cryoprecipitate.
28. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body's organs and tissue.
29. There are one billion red blood cells in two to three drops of blood.
30. Red blood cells live about 120 days in the circulatory system.
31. Platelets support blood clotting and give those with leukemia and other cancers a chance to live.
32. Apheresis (ay-fur-ee-sis) is a special kind of blood donation that allows a donor to give specific blood components, such as platelets.
33. The shelf life of donated red blood cells is 42 days.
34. The shelf life of donated platelets is five days.
35. The shelf life of frozen plasma is one year.
36. Plasma is a pale yellow mixture of water, proteins and salts.
37. Plasma, which is 90% water, constitutes 55% of blood volume.
38. Healthy bone marrow makes a constant supply of red cells, plasma and platelets.
39. Car accident and blood loss victims can need transfusions of 50 pints or more of red blood cells.
40. Bone marrow transplant patients need platelet donations from about 120 people and red blood cells from about 20 people.
41. Severe burn victims can need 20 units of platelets during their treatment.
42. Children being treated for cancer, premature infants and children having heart surgery need blood and platelets from donors of all types.
43. Anemic patients need blood transfusions to increase their iron levels.
44. Cancer, transplant and trauma patients, and patients undergoing open-heart surgery require platelet transfusions to survive.
45. Sickle cell disease is an inherited disease that affects more than 80,000 people in the United States, 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.
46. 500,000 Americans donated blood in the days following the September 11 attacks.
47. Females receive 53% of blood transfusions; males receive 47%.
48. 94% of blood donors are registered voters.
49. 37% of the U.S. population is eligible to donate blood -- less than 10 do, annually.
50. 17% of non-donors cite "never thought about it" as the main reason for not giving, while 15% say they're too busy. The #1 reason donors say they give is because they "want to help others."
51. After donating blood, you replace these red blood cells within four weeks. It takes eight weeks to restore the iron lost after donating.
52. Granulocytes, a type of white blood cell, roll along blood vessel walls in search of bacteria to eat.
53. White cells are the body's primary defense against infection.
54. There is no substitute for human blood.
55. Since a pint is a pound, you lose a pound every time you donate blood.
56. Blood donation. It's about an hour of your time. It's About Life.