



# REAL LIFE SOLUTIONS

## 4 UNEXPECTED BENEFITS OF DONATING BLOOD

When was the last time you donated blood? Did you know that with every donation, you can save up to three human lives! It's National Blood Donor Month, created to shed light on the serious need for blood donations in the winter months.

### **EVERY TWO SECONDS, SOMEONE IN THE UNITED STATES NEEDS BLOOD.**

On average, more than 41,000 blood donations are needed every day, according to the American Red Cross. In the winter months, the Red Cross receives fewer blood donations due to incremental weather and seasonal sicknesses, like the flu, that may cause some donors to become temporarily unable to donate.

While giving blood should be all about helping those in need, there are a few things in it for you! Here are four health perks of becoming a blood donor, according to Health Magazine and lifehack.org:

#### **Your blood may flow better**

Repeated blood donations may help the blood flow in a way that's less damaging to the lining of the blood vessels and could result in fewer arterial blockages. That may explain why the American Journal of Epidemiology found blood donors are 88% less likely to suffer from a heart attack.

#### **You'll get a mini check-up**

Before you give blood, you'll first have to complete a quick physical that measures your temperature, pulse, blood pressure and hemoglobin levels. After your blood is collected, it's sent off to a lab where it will undergo 13 different tests for disease and abnormalities. If anything comes back positive, you'll be notified immediately.

#### **Your iron levels will stay balanced - reducing the risk of heart disease and cancer**

Healthy adults usually have about 5 grams of iron in their bodies, mostly in red blood cells but also in bone marrow. When you donate a unit of blood, you lose about a quarter of a gram of iron, which gets replenished from the food you eat in a week after donation. This regulation of iron levels is a good thing, and has been found to reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer.

#### **The joy of saving human lives**

It is such a wonderful feeling being able to help doctors save human lives. There is no perfect substitute for human blood. The blood you donate is divided into various components according to the needs of patients. Each component can be used by different recipients for various purposes. Many newborn babies benefit from a single blood donor as their blood requirements are smaller. Be a hero by donating blood.

Resolve to give blood or platelets regularly in 2016! Blood can be safely donated every 56 days. Platelets can be given every seven days (up to 24 times a year).



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## LIFE SAVERS

While a New Year's resolution to save a life might seem a bit outlandish, it's actually quite doable. Did you know that every two seconds someone needs blood? According to LifeServe Blood Center, one in seven individuals in the hospital require blood and only 10% of those eligible to donate do so annually. Donor eligibility includes the following:

- In general good health (must not have a common cold)
- Sixteen years of age or older; those under 18 will need parental consent
- Weigh at least 120 pounds
- Normal blood pressure, temperature, pulse, and hemoglobin screenings
- Not pregnant
- Not under physician's care for any serious illness or injury

As you set your good intentions for 2016, consider saving a life through blood donation!

Source: <http://www.lifeservebloodcenter.org/>



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