

Facts About...

Organizing Your Blood Drive

Every two minutes someone in Southern Louisiana and Mississippi needs a blood transfusion.

Blood is vital for children and adults battling cancer, surgery patients, accident victims, and other ill and injured people. By sponsoring a blood drive with The Blood Center, you will help ensure this lifesaving gift is available when your neighbors need it.

Fact: Volunteer donors are the only source of blood for our community supply.

Fact: Last year, more than XXXXX patients were helped by volunteer blood donors.

Five steps to success

Organizing your blood drive is relatively simple and your Blood Center representative will be right there with you every step of the way. There are basically five steps in the process:

1. Find your potential - Start by finding out how many people in your group are interested in donating blood. This can be by circulating a commitment sheet asking people to commit to donating blood if you have a blood drive.
2. Set a goal, a site and a date - Once you have your commitments, your Blood Center representative will work with you to select an available date and time that is convenient for your group and a site that can accommodate equipment, staff and donor needs.
3. Recruit donors and promote drive - Ask and remind: ask donors to make an appointment and remind them of their time. That's all there is to it.
4. Oversee drive - Be available (or have a designee available) on the day of the drive to guide Blood Center Collection Staff during set-up and answer questions.
5. Recognize donors - Keep donors coming back by thanking them for their gift and reminding them that they will be eligible to donate again in 56 days!

Fact: Teamwork can make planning your blood drive easier and more rewarding. Try to form a committee to help you with publicity, donor and volunteer recruitment and donor recognition.

Donor Recruitment - Face to Face

Nothing is more effective than face-to-face recruitment. When you ask people to give blood, you give them a chance to give back to their community in a personal and relatively easy way.

Fact: The most common reason people give for *not* giving blood is that they have never been asked.

Fact: Most people 17 and older (16 with parental consent), who weigh at least 110 pounds and are in good general health can donate every eight weeks.

When recruiting donors face to face:

- Let people know that more than 350 pints of blood are needed daily to support hospital patients in Southern Louisiana and Mississippi and that your drive is vital to helping meet this need;
- Be prepared to answer questions about the donation process;
- Provide information about your blood drive, including the date, time and location;
- Refer questions about donor eligibility to The Blood Center, 1-800-86-BLOOD.

Other donor recruitment ideas:

- Have your committee assist with face-to-face recruitment;
- Establish a calling committee to contact people you cannot ask face-to-face by phone;
- Ask your organization's leader (president, principal, pastor, etc.) to send a letter to all members sharing the importance of blood donation and asking them to support your drive;
- Encourage donors to bring a friend.

Fact: Achieving your blood drive goal is critical to helping meet community blood needs.

Fact: Scheduled donors are more likely to honor their commitment. You can keep your drive running smoothly by scheduling donors with specific appointment times.

The gift of time...

Volunteering is a great way for people who may not be able to donate blood to support your drive. Volunteers can assist before the drive with donor recruitment and publicity, and after the drive with donor recognition.

Volunteers are also needed on the day of the drive.

Greeters: Greet and sign-in donors.

Donor monitors: Observe donors for adverse physical reactions after donation and provide donors with refreshments to help replenish lost fluids.

Blood Drive Promotion

While a personal invitation to give blood is always the most effective donor recruitment tool, there are many ways to remind potential donors and promote your blood drive:

- Make announcements or presentations to your group to reinforce the need for donors and answer questions;
- Post flyers advertising the date, time and scheduling contact for the drive;
- Develop special events or creative promotions connected to the drive;
- Include an article about the drive in your organization's newsletter;
- Use paycheck stuffers to announce your blood drive;
- Send e-mail messages with blood drive information and post on your social media sites;
- Circulate sign-up sheets or have a sign-up table in a high traffic area.

A little thanks goes a long way...

Blood recipients rarely get the chance to thank the people who have given them the gift of life. Let donors know they're appreciated by thanking them on behalf of those who will be helped by their donation.

You could try one of the following ways to say "thanks!"

- Take photos of donors during the blood drive and publish them in the organization's newsletter or post them on a bulletin board in a high traffic area.
- Write a "thank you" article for your organization's newsletter including interviews with first-time and experienced donors.
- Use holiday themes. For example, give each donor a thank you valentine, send Thanksgiving day greetings, or decorate a Christmas giving tree with donor's names.
- Post "honor rolls" listing all the blood donors' names in high traffic areas.
- Ask your organization's leader (president, principal, pastor, etc.) to write a special "thank you" letter to all donors.