

Donating Blood

How it works and what to expect your first time

Imagine Saving A Life

Right now there are patients in hospitals throughout southern Louisiana and southern Mississippi who need your help! Donating blood takes less than an hour of your time. It's easy to do, nearly painless, and you can give blood up to six times a year. Yet less than five percent of the people who are able to give blood actually do—and most of them only give once a year. People who haven't donated before may be hesitant simply because they don't know how easy and safe giving blood is. With every blood donation, you can help save three lives—premature babies, children and adults with cancer, surgery patients, and victims of traumatic injury—people like the ones in your neighborhood, school, or even your own family.

The Donation Process:

1. Prepare for your donation by having a good meal before you donate, including plenty of fluids.
2. Read the Blood Donor Educational Material and complete the FastLane medical and health history questionnaire.
3. A staff member will conduct a medical history interview and a brief health screening including blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and blood iron level.
4. You will relax on a donor bed while a unit (about one pint) is collected by specially trained staff. Most people feel just a pinch when the needle is first inserted and nothing during the rest of the donation. **(The actual donation process takes less than ten minutes!)**
5. Enjoy some cookies and juice!

FAQ:

Will it hurt?

The needle insertion feels like a little pinch—other than that, most donors feel no discomfort.

How long does it take?

The entire whole blood donation process, from registration to post-donation refreshments, takes less than an hour. The actual blood draw takes 5 to 10 minutes.

How much blood is taken?

One unit is equivalent to one pint. Our staff will also draw a few small tubes of blood for lab testing.

How will I feel after I donate?

Most people feel fine after giving blood. Your body makes new blood constantly, and the fluid you give will be replaced within hours. You should avoid alcohol before and after donating, and smokers should refrain from smoking for 30 minutes after giving.

What happens to my blood after?

All donated blood is tested for blood type, hepatitis, HIV, syphilis, and other transmissible diseases. Blood is then separated into various components (red cells, platelets, and plasma) and shipped to one of our area hospitals.

Does TBC pay me for my donation?

No. All TBC blood donors are volunteers. In fact, all blood collected for transfusion in the United States must be from volunteer donors.