Facts About Blood

1. The number one reason people don’t donate blood is because they were never asked.
2. The number one recipients of blood donations are cancer patients.
3. Our local hospitals need over 400 units of blood per day.
4. When you donate whole blood, it is split into three products: red blood cells, plasma, and platelets. Therefore, one donation can save up to three lives!
5. By donating just platelets, the highly-concentrated number can be split among up to three patients as well.
6. Platelets help stop bleeding and give those with leukemia and other cancers a chance to live.
7. A, B and AB blood donors’ platelets are compatible with most of the population.
8. Levine Children’s Hospital is just one of the 22 hospitals depending on blood/platelets from CBCC each day.
9. 4.5 million Americans will need blood transfusions each year.
10. Someone needs blood every two seconds.
11. An estimated 38 percent of the U.S. population is eligible to donate blood - less than 10 percent do annually.
12. About 1 in 7 people entering a hospital need blood.
13. Healthy adults who are at least 16 years old (with parental consent), and at least 120 pounds may donate blood every 56 days. Donors weighing at least 110 lbs may give platelets every two weeks - or up to 24 times a year.
14. Four main red blood cell types: A, B, AB and O. Each can be positive or negative for the Rh factor. AB is the universal recipient; O negative is the universal donor of red blood cells.
15. Dr. Karl Landsteiner first identified the major human blood groups (A, B, AB and O) in 1901.
16. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body’s organs and tissues.
17. Red blood cells live about 120 days in the circulatory system.
18. Plasma, which is 90 percent water, makes up 55 percent of blood volume.
19. Healthy bone marrow makes a constant supply of red cells, plasma and platelets.
20. Blood or plasma that comes from people who have been paid for it cannot be used for human transfusions - it typically goes toward cosmetics or research.
21. Apheresis (a-fur-ee-sis) is a special kind of blood donation that allows a donor to give specific blood components, such as platelets.
22. Forty-two days: how long donated red blood cells can be stored.
23. Five days: how long donated platelets can be stored.
24. One year: how long frozen plasma can be stored.
25. Much of today’s medical care depends on a steady supply of blood from healthy donors.
26. The average whole blood and red blood cell transfusion takes 3 pints of blood.
27. Children being treated for cancer, premature infants and children having heart surgery need blood and platelets from donors of all types, especially type O.
28. Anemic patients need blood transfusions to increase their red blood cell levels.
29. Cancer, transplant and trauma patients, and patients undergoing open-heart surgery often require platelet transfusions to survive.
30. Sickle cell disease is an inherited disease that affects more than 80,000 people in the United States, 98 percent of whom are of African descent.
31. Many patients with severe sickle cell disease receive blood transfusions every month.
32. A patient could be forced to pass up a lifesaving organ, if compatible blood is not available to support the transplant.
33. Thirteen tests (11 for infectious diseases) are performed on each unit of donated blood.
34. The #1 reason blood donors say they give is because they "want to help others."
35. Shortages of all blood types happen during the summer and winter holidays.
36. Blood centers often run short of type O blood and all type AB platelets.
37. There is no substitute for human blood.
38. If all current blood donors gave three times a year, blood shortages would be a rare event.
39. If all eligible Americans gave blood once a year, we’d never have a blood shortage again.
40. 46.5 gallons: amount of blood you could donate if you begin at age 17 and donate every 56 days until you reach 79 years old.
41. Four easy steps to donate blood: medical history, mini physical, donation and snacks.
42. The actual blood donation usually takes about 10 minutes. The entire process – from the time you sign in to the time you leave – takes about an hour.
43. After donating blood, you replace the fluid in hours and the red blood cells within four weeks. It takes eight weeks to restore the iron lost after donating.
44. You cannot get AIDS or any other infectious disease by donating blood.
45. 10 pints: amount of blood in the body of an average adult.
46. One unit of whole blood is roughly the equivalent of one pint.
47. Blood makes up about 7 percent of your body's weight.
48. A newborn baby has about one cup of blood in his body.
49. Giving blood will not decrease your strength.
50. Any company, community organization, place of worship or individual may contact CBCC to host a blood drive.
51. Blood drives hosted by companies, schools, places of worship and civic organizations supply roughly half of all blood donations across the U.S.
52. People who donate blood are volunteers and are not paid for their donation.
53. 500,000: the number of Americans who donated blood in the days following the September 11 attacks.
54. When you give blood, you are giving life.