



What happens to your blood donation?

Blood is made up of several elements that perform special functions in your body. Because **your whole blood donation will be divided into parts** to meet various medical needs, your donation can help up to three different people. The most well-known components derived from whole blood are **red cells, platelets and plasma**.

RED CELLS carry oxygen from the lungs to all other tissues in the body. These cells pick up carbon dioxide from tissues that is then carried back and released into the lungs. Red cells help patients who are anemic because of blood loss.

Shelf life: 42 days, unless frozen; frozen cells may be outdated up to 10 years

PLATELETS are cell fragments or particles in blood that help form clots and stop bleeding. Platelets are transfused to patients who experience bleeding because they can't produce enough platelets of their own. Many platelet recipients are children undergoing treatment for extremely serious health problems like leukemia, cancer and aplastic anemia.

Shelf life: 5 days

PLASMA is the liquid yellow portion of blood. It carries nutrients, removes waste, and serves as an energy source, a regulator of body functions, a system for infection fighting, and coagulation. Plasma may be frozen and processed into several specialized blood products.

- **Fresh frozen plasma (FFP)**--used for transfusions to patients with bleeding complications
- **Cryoprecipitate**--needed by people with classic hemophilia and common clotting disorders
- **Albumin**--needed by burn victims, in emergencies related to accident or shock cases, and in the treatment of certain kidney and liver diseases
- **Immune globulin**--used to supplement a patient's immune system, to battle various microbial disease, or for clotting
- **Fibrin bandages**--now under development by Holland Laboratory, these plasma-derived bandages could be used on battlefields or on the scene of serious accidents where bleeding contributes to loss of life.

Shelf life: Several years; varies by plasma product

Help save lives. Donate blood. Call 1-800-GIVE LIFE