

TYPES OF BLOOD DONATION

» Whole Blood

This is the most common type of blood donation. You can donate whole blood at any LifeSource mobile blood drive or community donor center. A phlebotomist will prepare the area of your arm from which the blood will be drawn. The actual donation takes about 10 minutes as approximately one pint of blood is collected. All materials used during your donation are pre-packaged, sterile and disposable. They are used only once and then discarded. Each unit of whole blood is separated into three main components: red blood cells, platelets and plasma. Therefore, with each whole blood donation, up to three lives can be saved.

» Apheresis (ay-fer-EE-sis)

This is a special kind of blood donation that allows a donor to give specific single blood components, like platelets, plasma or red blood cells.

» **Platelet**—One or two arms are used during a platelet donation. Blood is drawn from that arm and channeled through a sterile, disposable kit housed in a special cell-separating machine. The machine spins the blood to separate the platelets, and then returns the red blood cells and plasma to the donor in the same arm. The body replaces the amount of platelets donated in about 48 hours.

» **Plasma**—During a plasma donation, whole blood is drawn from one arm just like a regular blood donation. The difference is that the blood flows into a sterile collection kit inside a cell-separating machine. The machine spins the blood so that only plasma is removed and saved. The other blood components, red blood cells and platelets, are returned to the body through the same line.

» **Red Blood Cells**—A double red blood cell (2RBC) donation allows one blood donor to give two units of red blood cells. The red cells are selectively separated as the blood is collected, and the rest is immediately returned to the donor, along with 500mL saline solution to replace the volume lost.

» Autologous (ah-TALL-o-gus)

This donation is one that you do for your own use. If you have elective surgery scheduled and are medically eligible, you may be able to give your own blood for later use. This type of donation is prescribed by your doctor.

» Directed

This is a donation given for a particular person. If you are the one in need of blood or blood products, a directed donation allows you to receive blood from your family members and friends, if their blood type is compatible with yours and they meet all medical eligibility requirements. While there is no medical evidence that shows directed blood donations are safer than donations from the community blood supply, you may feel more comfortable selecting your own donors. Directed donations may not be appropriate for emergency procedures since it takes time to fully test and process each unit of blood.

» Therapeutic Phlebotomy

Therapeutic phlebotomy is performed for donors with hereditary hemochromatosis (HH), a genetic disease that causes the body to absorb and store too much iron. As part of their treatment, most HH patients regularly have blood drawn. HH donations from qualified donors can be used for transfusion purposes if the blood meets all established standards. If an HH patient does not meet all medical eligibility requirements for donation, LifeSource will still perform therapeutic phlebotomy at no charge.