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The Benefits of Donating Blood

# Introduction

Human blood is among the few things that technology has not found substitute for. No one can manufacture it outside the body. Yet, every year, it is required to save millions of lives of people who are victims of accidents or are suffering from certain diseases.

Since 1947, when several blood banks had been established across the United States, the public had been actively donating blood as a way of fulfilling one’s civic responsibility. Since then, more and more lives had been saved.

Studies have found that the proportion of repeat donors increased with age and education level. According to Abdullah (2011), those who have higher education tend to donate more frequently.

It seems like the more people understand, the more they are willing to give. So, what makes these donors come back several times a year?

# Body

1. You save lives.

Every time you donate blood, you help save as many as 3 lives.

Right now, in the US alone, someone needs blood donation every 3 seconds and average of 40, 000 units are needed every single day. The person you could help can be an infant born prematurely, a neighbor suffering from a disease, or possibly some relative who just had a major surgery.

At some point of their life, 60% of the population will need blood, yet only less than 5% donates.

1. It takes away excess iron and reduces risks of heart diseases.

Aside from that wonderful feeling of fulfillment, your body can also benefit much from donating blood. When you donate blood, you also get rid of excess iron in your body.

Iron is essential for a body’s healthy function: it transports oxygen. But once there is an excess of it in the body, iron can be deposited in the heart, pancreas, and liver where it can cause damage. Excess iron has also been found to cause high blood pressure. Because blood donation helps people regulate the amount of iron in their blood, men can greatly benefit from the process more than women who menstruate every month.

According to Dr. Phillip DeChristopher, blood bank director at Loyola University Health System, repeated blood donations lead to better blood circulation, decreasing risks of blood vessel lining damages and arterial blockages.

Experts just want to warn those who suffer from iron deficiency, though. A study conducted among Saudi Arabian men showed that some blood donors may develop iron deficiency, especially if the iron in their body is already below or just bordering normal range to begin with.

1. You get a health screening.

It’s a great thing that blood donors are made to undergo a health screening before being allowed to donate blood. Now, you can be sure that you are healthy enough to afford losing some blood in a given time. The health screening you get does not just make sure the blood you donate is healthy and safe. It also benefits you as a donor.

Before you are allowed to donate, the doctors and nurses will have to know your resting heartbeat, temperature, cholesterol and hemoglobin levels, and blood pressure. If you decided to max out your opportunity to help, you will have your health checked by professionals every two months. You can then track your health by using these numbers and see how exercise, diet and other lifestyle changes affect your body.

# Conclusion

Donating blood is something everyone should be happy to do, given the number of lives depending on it. This philanthropic action does not only give the gift of life to many. It also gives back great benefits to those who donate blood.

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