
BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - BLOOD DONOR PROGRAM COVID-19 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DONOR ELIGIBILITY AND APPOINTMENT INFORMATION

How do I know if I'm eligible to donate?

As information is constantly changing with COVID-19 recommendations, healthy donors may call us at 617-355-6677 or visit www.halfpints.childrenshospital.org to find out more about eligibility requirements.

I have an appointment to give blood soon. Should I keep my appointment?

YES!!! Please keep your commitment to donating blood as long as you are feeling well and healthy and meet all other eligibility requirements on the day you donate, including the COVID-19 screening questions. There is no substitute for human blood and the need is constant. Our patients rely on the continuous generosity of volunteer donors like you!

I've gone online and there are no appointments available for the next few weeks. Do you really need the blood?

YES!!! As the clinics begin to increase patient volume and perform more procedures each day, we have put out a call to action for donors to come into the Donor Center to give blood and platelets. We have adjusted our operational hours and have added donor appointments to accommodate the collection need. We will continually need to supply blood products to our pediatric patients on a consistent basis throughout the pandemic. If all current appointments are booked, please find an open appointment in the weeks or month ahead as we will still need your donation!

Are you taking walk-ins? Can I donate without having an appointment?

We encourage donors to have appointments as this allows us to adhere to appropriate social distancing guidelines and to optimize the experience for our donors. If you are unable to find a convenient appointment online, please call us at 617-355-6677. However, if you are in the area of our Blood Donor Center or one of our bloodmobile drives and would like to donate, stop by or call us! We may have had a cancellation and could fit you in. If we cannot we'd be happy to make you an appointment for another time.

If there is a stay-at-home order, can I still come to donate blood?

YES!!! Donating blood is essential and necessary health care activity. If you are feeling healthy and well, and meet all other eligibility requirements (including COVID-19 screening questions) we encourage you to book your appointment to donate blood or platelets.

If I live out of state but want to come into Boston to donate, do I have to self-quarantine per Massachusetts guidelines before donating?

No. Donating blood is essential and is not included in the self-quarantine for crossing state lines.

What should I do if I donate and then start feeling sick later?

Please call us immediately using the instructions on your post-donation information card.

SOCIAL DISTANCING & INFECTION PREVENTION MEASURES

What social distancing measures are being done in the Donor Center and on the Bloodmobile?

- Chairs in the waiting area and collection area are spaced apart
- We are limiting the number of people in the Donor Center and on the Bloodmobile
- Donors will be taken **by appointment only**
- You may be asked to wait in your car until it is your turn to be taken for donation (Bloodmobile)



What infection prevention and control measures are being done in the Donor Center and on the Bloodmobile?

At the Blood Donor Center and on our Bloodmobile, we follow thorough infection prevention and safety protocols to protect donors, staff, and the safety of the blood product and recipient. These measures include:

- Wearing face masks at all times (donors and staff).
- Practicing hand hygiene and wearing gloves
- Routinely wiping down donor chairs after each donor as well as all high-touch surface areas (counters, chairs, computer keyboards and accessories, pens, door handles, etc.) with disinfecting wipes
- Using sterile, single use collection sets for every donation and preparing the arm with an aseptic scrub
- Using single use, disposable foam stars for donors to squeeze while donating

What COVID-19 screening questions are asked?

Prior to entering the Donor Center or Bloodmobile, donors will be pre-screened with the following questions and asked to reschedule their appointment if they answer 'yes' to any of the questions below:

- Do you have fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, difficulty breathing, chills, or new onset of loss of taste or smell?
- Have you been tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
- Has a household member tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 35 days?

Is staff screened for COVID-19?

Yes. All staff is screened every day for any COVID-19 related symptoms before they start work and are required to leave work if they feel any symptoms during the day. Staff who doesn't feel well is required to stay home.

Will my donated blood get tested for coronavirus?

No. There is currently no test available for blood donations that screens for COVID-19. DO NOT donate blood just to be tested for COVID-19 or any other diseases.

Will my donated blood get tested for COVID-19 antibodies?

At this time, we are not testing for COVID-19 antibodies.

What is "convalescent plasma" and are you collecting it from donors who have recovered from COVID-19?

Convalescent plasma is plasma collected from donors who have recovered from COVID-19. This plasma contains antibodies to the disease that can be given to patients currently fighting COVID-19 to increase their ability to battle their illness. The BDC Blood Donor Center is not collecting convalescent plasma at this time. If you are interested in donating convalescent plasma, click here for more information: <https://covidplasma.org>

Can someone get COVID-19 from a blood transfusion?

There is no evidence that this coronavirus is transmissible by blood transfusion and there have been no reported cases of transfusion transmission for any respiratory virus, including coronavirus.

I have more questions that aren't covered here. What should I do?

Please call the Donor Center at 617-355-6677 and we can answer any other questions that you may have.

There is no substitute for human blood and it is the blood that is already on the shelves that saves lives. We strongly urge healthy individuals to make and keep their scheduled donation appointments and blood drives to minimize disruptions to the blood supply and help maintain a safe blood supply for our patients in need.

To book your appointment, visit: www.halfpints.childrenshospital.org or call us at (617)355-6677
