

## BEFORE YOUR DONATION

Before giving blood, we ask you to complete a medical questionnaire. You will then be seen by a health professional who will review your medical history and assess your medical condition on the basis of your questionnaire.

If any short or long term contraindication is identified, you might be uneligible to donate. This is to protect the health of the people who will receive your blood, but also to safeguard your own personal health.

If you do not understand why you cannot give blood, do not hesitate to ask for further explanations.

## AFTER YOUR DONATION

A POST-DONATION document will be given to you after the medical examination. It will allow you, if necessary, to contact us to report :

- > any relevant information you might have forgotten to mention during the medical interview and that could represent a risk for the recipient
- > an infectious disease, fever, rash, swollen lymph nodes, digestive disorder, ... arisen after your donation
- > discomfort or other problems in you arm.

## INFORMATION BEFORE GIVING BLOOD

This document is intended to provide you with information which will enable you to answer the medical questionnaire with a proper understanding of what constitutes risk behaviour. The health and safety of the person who will receive your blood depends on this.

More detailed information is also available in the DONOR GUIDE.  
Ask our team.

### NEVER GIVE BLOOD

**in order to obtain a screening test.**

**The doctor can tell you where you can have it done.**

## SERVICE DU SANG

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**GIVING BLOOD**  
**... RESPONSIBLY**

**RISK BEHAVIOUR**  
What you need to know

**CROIX-ROUGE**  
de Belgique 

## INFORMATION ABOUT AIDS

AIDS is a disease caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (H.I.V.). An HIV-infected person gradually loses his/her ability to fight infections (Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome).

### How is the AIDS virus transmitted?

HIV is transmitted through sexual intercourse, through the introduction into the body of a fluid infected with the virus (e.g. blood transfusion) or from mother-to-child (pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding).

### Can I get infected by giving blood?

**NO.** The equipment used for blood collection is disposable. NEVER reused, it is destroyed by incineration.

### Can I be infected by receiving blood?

The risk is extremely low (<1/1,000,000). This high level of safety is the result of a real evolution in the field of transfusion:

1. Self-exclusion of donors with risk behaviour.
2. Systematic and confidential medical interview.
3. Screening for AIDS and other bloodborne diseases (hepatitis B and C, malaria, syphilis, Chagas). For the tests to detect these diseases, the relevant pathogens or antibodies must be present in sufficient amount in the blood. As they take some time to develop, even after an infection they might not be detectable for a while but this doesn't exclude that the donation can contaminate the recipient («window period»).

The development of viro-inactivation techniques in the preparation of platelets, as well as plasma and its derivatives, further reduces the risk.

### Stages of HIV infection

1. **Window period:** The person has just been infected. He or she is not ill and the level of antibodies against the disease is too low to be detected by a blood test. This means that the infected person can already transmit the virus, even if all the tests are negative.
2. **Seropositivity period:** Antibodies can be detected. The person is said to be HIV-positive, he/she is not yet ill but can transmit the virus.
3. **Period of illness or AIDS:** The virus has severely weakened the body's defences and the person develops various serious conditions: he/she has AIDS.

## WHAT ARE RISK BEHAVIOURS?

These are behaviours, sexual or not, or situations leading to a risk of contracting a serious infectious disease that can be transmitted by blood and is likely to cause a medical risk for the recipient.

Before giving blood, we ask you to complete a medical questionnaire. The safety of the recipients depends on how thoroughly and truthfully you complete it!

Defer your donation if you have been personally involved in any of the following situations in the last 4 months :

- > tattoo or piercing (including earrings)
- > treatment by mesotherapy or by acupuncture with non-disposable needles
- > contact with human blood by injection, wound, projection
- > inter-human bite
- > new sexual partner, even an occasional one (\*)
- > sexual partner suffering from syphilis (\*)
- > use of hard drugs intranasally.

Defer your donation if in the last 12 months you have had sex :

- > with a man if you are a man (\*)
- > for money, goods or services (\*)
- > with more than one partner during the same period or participated in group sex (\*)
- > with a partner suffering from one of the following diseases: AIDS, hepatitis B or C, HTLV (\*)
- > with a partner who is or was a hard drug user (intravenous or intramuscular) (\*)
- > with a partner born in a country or region where there are many cases of HIV/AIDS and who was still living there in the past 12 months. (\*)

In addition, if you had a sexual partner who, to your knowledge, has...

- > had sex with more than one partner during the same period or participated in group sex (\*)
- > had sex for money, goods or services (\*)
- > if a man, had sex with a man.

... you will also have to wait 12 months from the date your partner had this behaviour at risk, or if in doubt, 12 months after your last sexual contact with him or her.

(\*) with or without a condom - criteria set out in the "Law on Miscellaneous Health Provisions" published in the Belgian Official Gazette on 28/08/2017.

