

# ADVANTAGE

## Blood Donation

If you have any concerns about whether your plan covers the subject matter discussed in Advantage, please contact your NMG Benefits Healthcare Advisor.

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### Why is blood donation important?



Donating blood saves people's lives when they have lost a lot of blood, or when they are not able to produce enough blood cells

### What blood groups are needed?

There are four types of blood groups: A, B, AB and O:

People with blood group O- are called universal donors	People with blood group AB+ are called universal recipients	Group O is in greater demand due to compatibility

### Is donated blood tested - can I contract HIV from it?

- Donated blood is tested for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Syphilis and HIV 1&2
- Every blood donation goes through the same stringent testing
- Even if you are a regular donor, your blood still gets tested every time you donate

### Who can donate blood?

- Anyone over the age of 16
- Weighing at least 50kg
- You are healthy
- Your social behaviour does not place you at a risk of transmitting HIV or Hepatitis



## Questions

for Dr Thapelo Motshudi

### 1 Why is donating blood important?

Donating blood saves people's lives when they have lost a lot of blood over a short or long period of time, or when they are not able to produce enough blood cells. Examples include women who bleed excessively during pregnancy or delivery, victims of trauma or motor vehicle accidents, patients undergoing surgery and those with anaemia or other illnesses like cancer. It is important to note that blood donors do not get paid, because this has to be an act of selflessness.

### 2 What blood groups are needed most?

There are four types of blood groups: A, B, AB and O. These are further categorized as Rh+ or Rh-, based on the Rhesus classification. People with blood group O- can donate blood to everyone and are called universal donors. Those with blood group AB+ can receive blood from everyone and are thus called universal recipients. Group O is in greater demand and these donors are asked to donate regularly because their blood is especially useful during emergencies, when there is no time to check for compatibility.

### 3 Is donated blood tested - can I get HIV from it?

While nothing is ever completely risk free, the chance of acquiring any disease from a blood transfusion, including HIV, is so low that one can consider it to be negligible. Donated blood is rigorously tested for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Syphilis, and HIV 1&2. Every unit of blood collected goes through the same stringent testing. So, it does not matter if it's your first time, or if you are a regular donor, your blood still gets tested every time you donate.

### 4 Who can donate blood?

Anyone over the age of 16, who weighs at least 50 kg, is healthy, does not have anaemia, is not on certain types of medication and whose social behaviour does not place them at an increased risk of transmitting HIV or hepatitis, can donate. Pregnant women and people who have had recent surgery are not allowed to donate.

### 5 Facts about blood donation

- An average human being has about 5 L of blood at any one time
- Donated blood is replaced within 24 hours if one takes in enough fluids, although red blood cells take much longer to replace
- Only 480 mL can be donated at a time and one can only donate blood every 56 days so that your body can have enough time to recover
- Approximately 112 million blood donations are collected globally, mainly from high-income countries
- Blood has a number of components and donations can include whole blood, red blood cells, platelets or plasma.