

Other Information

Bone Marrow Registry
The **IBTS** also runs the Irish Unrelated Bone Marrow Registry which facilitates stem cell transplants for Irish and International patients. If you are interested in joining the bone marrow registry please ask for an information leaflet on clinic, be sure to indicate your interest on the back of the HLQ and inform a staff member before the donation process is started. Further information on bone marrow donation is also available at giveblood.ie/bonemarrow_marrow_registry.

Use of Blood Components and Samples for Research and Development
Donated blood is separated into red cells, platelets, plasma and occasionally granulocytes (white cells) which are blood components. The vast majority of red cells and platelets is transfused directly to patients e.g. after blood loss or cancer treatment. Plasma from Irish donors has not been given to Irish patients for many years as there was a concern that it could transmit vCJD (variant Creutzfeldt Jacob Disease). This is no longer a concern and starting in the autumn of 2024 the **IBTS** will send Irish plasma from whole blood donations to a plasma fractionator in Europe to make products that can be transfused to patients in Ireland and Europe. These products include pooled plasma and Plasma Derived Medicinal Products.

Every time plasma is sent, the **IBTS** will send the donor’s identification number, donation number and the results of their blood tests, by electronic file to the plasma fractionator. This personal data is required by the plasma fractionator to meet European legal requirements for the quality and safety of blood components. **Visit <https://www.octapharma.com/octapharma/data-protection-notice-donors>** to learn more about how your personal data is stored and used by the plasma fractionator. The **IBTS** currently imports plasma for Irish patients at a cost. Selling Irish plasma to this company will result in a supply of plasma donated by Irish donors for use by Irish patients and a net saving for the **IBTS** and the Irish healthcare system. Some plasma can be used in other ways that indirectly benefit patients, for example in ethically approved medical research, quality control, or for teaching purposes. The **IBTS** has agreed to supply waste plasma that cannot be sent for fractionation (which would otherwise be disposed of at a cost) to the manufacturing sector for use in preparing healthcare related laboratory tests.

The **IBTS** on occasions uses parts of donated blood for laboratory work, education, training or research purposes, within the **IBTS**, the Health Service or the Universities/Institutes of Technology. This includes white cells which are not given to patients, or blood not used within its shelf life. The **IBTS** does not receive any payment for this. Every time donated material is used for these purposes, the donation identification number, blood group, and occasionally the donor’s age and gender, will accompany the donation. This personal data is required for traceability purposes and research analysis. Please **visit <https://healthprofessionals.giveblood.ie/research/donated-material-for-health-research/>** to learn more about how your donation supports health research. In order to deliver a high standard quality service, the **IBTS** also, when required, uses blood within its shelf life to validate/quality check new blood bags or to test kits and equipment.

The **IBTS** also collaborates with some commercial entities to provide remnants of **IBTS** donor samples for research and development studies such as evaluating performance of manufacturers’ assays, evaluating materials and qualification of product changes. The **IBTS** and all blood services rely on commercial tests to ensure safe blood and collaborate in improving assay performance characteristics with commercial companies. If parts of your samples or donations are used for the above purposes, we will ensure, where appropriate, that there is no direct link between your personally identifiable data and the donated material and that approval from a research ethics committee is obtained where necessary.

The **IBTS** considers that this use of donations/samples is appropriate. The **IBTS** receives payment from some of these collaborations which helps offset some **IBTS** costs and is therefore of benefit to the Irish Health Service. The testing and use of your blood in the circumstances outlined above is of benefit to patients and by signing the Donor Declaration on the questionnaire you are giving the **IBTS** consent to do so where required. We would also like our donors to know that at times their donations are not used. This could happen if the donation was not a complete donation or if the donation is not used before its expiry date.

Data Protection and use of personal data

- The **IBTS** is committed to protecting the confidentiality of donors and to meeting our responsibilities under the Data Protection Acts 1988 – 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 679/2016 (GDPR).
- We process your information in order to assess your eligibility to donate; to communicate with you; to ensure both donor and patient safety; for clinical and regulatory audit purposes; to provide safe and suitable blood and tissue products to patients and to ensure the traceability of all donations in line with our legal requirements.
- We also process anonymised data for research purposes.
- Your information is managed appropriately and securely at all times, and we are required to retain records for 30 years.

For more information on the **IBTS** Data Protection Policy and your Data Protection rights please ask for our Data Protection Leaflet in clinic or see www.giveblood.ie/privacy

Communication

- As part of the donation process you will be asked to consent to the **IBTS** contacting you after donating and ahead of future donations.
- Texting is the primary method of communication we use pre and post clinic.
- Phone calls are used to answer donor queries; provide medical follow-up where needed and for specific requests to attend clinics.
- Letters are also used to provide medical follow-up when required.
- Email is used to answer donor queries; communicate about service evaluation and research projects; invite donors to participate in surveys and keep donors up to date about new developments.
- Social media platforms are used to communicate with donors, sharing general information on blood donation and inspirational stories about donors and patients.

For more information on the **IBTS** communication policy please ask for our leaflet on clinic or log onto www.giveblood.ie and search Privacy.

If you have any further questions please ask one of our staff in the clinic.



BLOOD SAFETY – KEEP TRANSFUSIONS SAFE

Help us keep the blood supply safe for patients by reading this information before you donate.

All donations are tested for infections that can be passed on by blood or platelet transfusions. **Early stage infection may not always show up on testing.** This is why we must take great care in donor selection and why you must not donate to see if you are infected. If you donate to see if you are infected you are putting patients’ lives at risk.

We rely totally on our donors to answer the questions we ask honestly and accurately to the best of their knowledge, as this is essential for the safety of the patients who receive blood. We ask that you please do so. All information you provide is confidential.

You must NEVER donate if:

	You think you need a test for HIV or hepatitis. (You can get a test from your GP or a sexual health clinic)
	You think your partner needs a test for HIV or hepatitis
	You or your partner has HIV or is receiving treatment for HIV
	You or your partner has HTLV
	You, your partner or close household contacts have hepatitis B or C*
	You have ever had or been treated for Syphilis
	You have ever received money or drugs for sex
	You have ever injected, or have been injected with non-prescribed drugs; even once or a long time ago. This includes body building drugs, injectable tanning agents and injected chemsex drugs.

You must NOT donate for at least 4 months after sex if:

	You have had anal sex with a new sexual partner**, or you had sex with more than one sexual partner and had anal sex.
	**A new sexual partner is someone you have not had sex with before or a person with whom you resumed a previous sexual relationship in the past 4 months.

You must NOT donate for at least 4 months after:

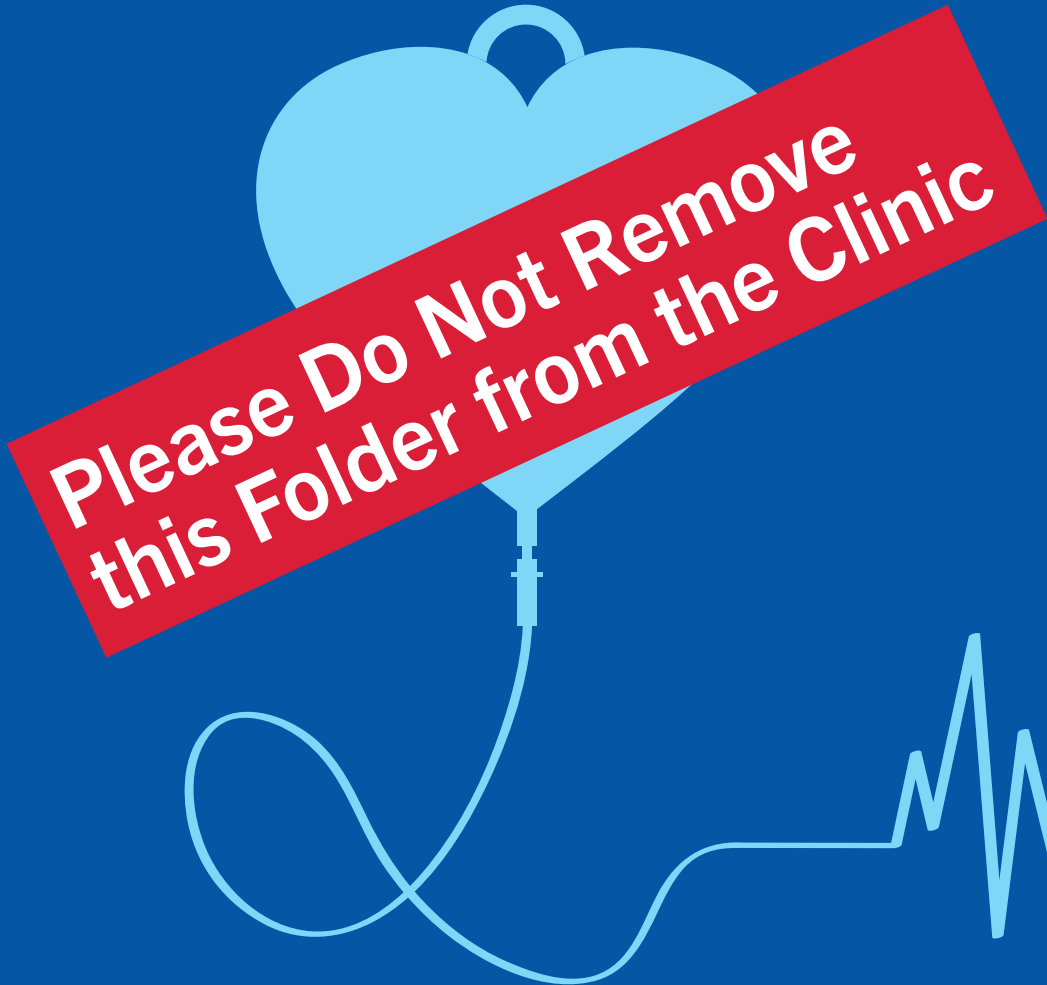
	You snorted cocaine or any other drug
	Conclusion of treatment and full recovery from Gonorrhoea
	You have taken medication to prevent HIV infection (pre /post exposure prophylaxis, PrEP/ PEP)
	You have taken part in Chemsex i.e. have used drugs (other than cannabis, alcohol, Viagra or other medication for erectile dysfunction) before or during sex to enhance sexual experience. Chemsex is a type of sexual activity where people take certain drugs to enhance their sexual experiences, and let them have sex for longer or with more people. Drugs associated with chemsex include methamphetamine, mephedrone, GHB and other drugs.
	NB IF you were injected or injected yourself with drugs during Chemsex even once or a long time ago you will never be able to donate.
	More information about Individual Donor Risk Assessment (IDRA) is available in the IDRA leaflet, please ask a staff member.

*There are exceptions so please speak to a nurse.

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Donation Information for Whole Blood Donors

Please read this donation information carefully, you will be asked to sign a donor declaration to confirm that you have read and understood this information and consent to the donation process.



Registration (New Donor)

In order to create a unique identification for you in the **IBTS** database, you will be asked to provide photo ID and give your name, date of birth, contact details, phone number and email address. This information will be used to contact you and send reminders about clinics. You will complete a Health and Lifestyle Questionnaire (HLQ). This asks specific questions about your health, lifestyle and travel history.

Interview – Health Screening (New Donor)

As a new donor or a donor who has not donated in the last 5 years, you will be interviewed by a Nurse on the clinic following completion of the HLQ that you were given at registration. This is to make sure that you are well enough to donate and that your blood is safe to give to a patient.

Information for new donors born outside of Ireland / the United Kingdom will be provided in a separate leaflet.

On some occasions it may not be possible to accept a donation from you for either medical or other reasons, this will be explained and you will be told if and when you are eligible to attend a clinic again.

Registration (Regular Donor)

As you have previously registered with the **IBTS** you will be asked to provide photo ID and to confirm your personal details, then you will be asked to complete a Health and Lifestyle Questionnaire (HLQ).

Interview – Health Screening (Regular Donor)

On completion of the HLQ you will have an interview with a staff member to assess your eligibility to donate. On some occasions it may not be possible to accept a donation from you for either medical or other reasons, this will be explained and you will be told if and when you are eligible to attend a clinic again.

Haemoglobin Testing (All Donors)

As part of the interview process a test is performed to measure your haemoglobin (Hb) level. Hb is a protein that contains iron and is found in red blood cells and carries oxygen around the body. The test is performed by taking a drop of blood from the tip of a finger. In some cases we ask that we can take a blood sample from your arm if the Hb level from the fingertip sample is outside the range for donation.

Hb levels vary between men and women. If your Hb level is not within the required range for donation today you will be given an information leaflet about iron and Hb. You will be advised about the next date you are eligible to attend. We will tell you if you have to attend your GP.

Giving blood often can lead to low iron levels as each donation contains approximately 240 mg of iron. Young donors, pre-menopausal females, donors who donate very regularly and those whose diets are low in iron are at a greater risk of developing iron deficiency after donating. This does not always cause symptoms, but may be associated with tiredness, impaired concentration or poor work performance. It can take some donors 4 to 6 months to replace the iron that was lost in their donation. Continued loss of iron can cause anaemia.

Consent

You will be asked to read and sign a Donor Declaration on the HLQ following your interview. Please read this carefully as this provides the **IBTS** with permission to:

- Take a donation
- Carry out testing (**HIV, Hepatitis and other infectious agents outlined below**)
- Issue your donation to patients in hospital or for use indirectly as outlined below
- Contact your Doctor or hospital to obtain further information regarding your eligibility to donate, if required.

If you decide at any time that you do not want to go ahead with the donation process you can leave the clinic, please return your questionnaire to a staff member. Once you have provided your information to the **IBTS** in order to donate, it must be retained so that we can meet our statutory requirements. Please ask our staff if you would like more information on this.

Donation Process

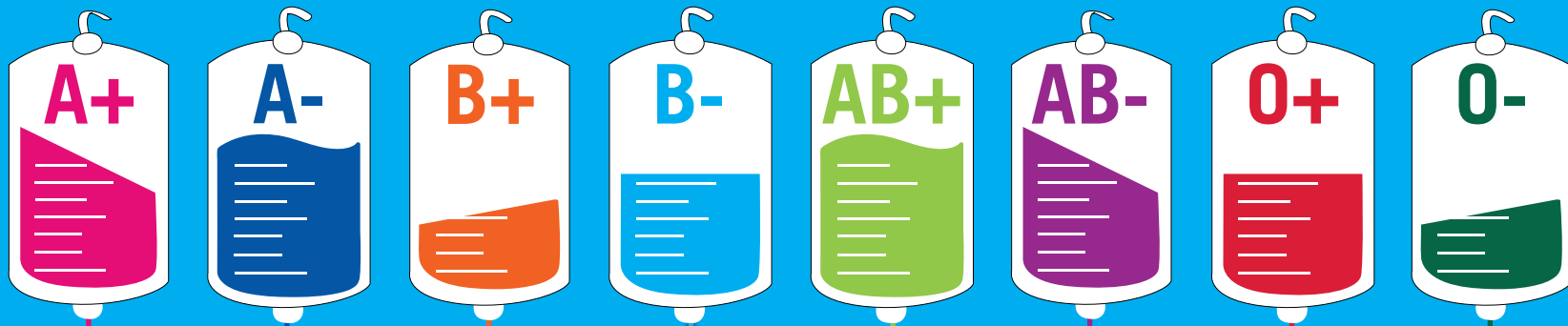
The donation takes no longer than 15 minutes. Following selection of a suitable vein a trained staff member will insert a needle that is attached to a blood collection bag into your arm. This needle is sterile and will be disposed of following your donation. Samples of blood will be taken at the start of the collection from a small pouch attached to the collection line.

During the donation if you feel in any way unwell or uncomfortable, please inform a staff member. Staff on clinic observe donors throughout the process and are trained to manage the complications associated with donation.

Once 470 mls of blood is collected, within 15 minutes, the donation will be completed and a trained member of staff will remove the donation needle from your arm and apply a specially designed plaster. You will be asked to apply firm pressure to your arm for at least 3 minutes to help prevent bruising.

After the Donation

You will be asked to rest for 15 minutes and offered refreshments and a snack. Enjoy, you deserve it! You will be given a post donation advice card by staff explaining the dos and don'ts following donation. It is important to follow this advice and remember to contact the **IBTS** as soon as you can if you become unwell in the 4 weeks following your donation. It is also important to contact the **IBTS** as soon as you can if you remember something that could impact a patient in hospital who would receive your blood as outlined at the interview.



Testing your Donation

Your blood group is checked every time you donate. The **IBTS** also tests every donation for HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, hepatitis E and syphilis. The first time you donate, your blood will also be tested for HTLV (a virus carried in blood that can cause serious blood and nervous system diseases). The **IBTS** may also carry out extra tests on some donations, for e.g. if you have travelled to a West Nile Virus at risk area, or to meet the needs of certain patients such as babies.

If a positive result for any of these blood tests is found, the donation will be discarded and not used for a patient. You will be contacted by the **IBTS** and offered advice and further testing.

The **IBTS** is legally bound to inform the Public Health Service if your tests confirm that you are positive for **HIV, hepatitis B, C, E or syphilis**. Your personal details, name, address and the results of the blood tests will be sent to the Public Health Service. In a small number of donors, the blood results can give a false positive reaction. You will be informed if this occurs and while there are no implications for your health, we will not be able to use the donation for patients. We freeze a small sample of your blood and retain it for 10 years in case it is necessary to carry out additional tests at a later date.



Possible Complications of Donation

For the majority of donors, the process is a simple and trouble-free experience, however in some cases problems may occur during or after the donation. If you have any problems after leaving the clinic, please contact the **IBTS** on **01 4322800 (Dublin)** or **021 4807400 (Cork)** or contact your GP.

All rates quoted are from **IBTS data 2017*

Bruising

Sometimes bruising can occur either during or after the donation (1/279). If noted during the donation, it will be stopped and a staff member will give you an information leaflet with advice about how to best manage the bruising e.g. avoid heavy lifting or manual work where possible for at least 12 hours. If you notice bruising after a donation, report this to a staff member, or if at home apply a cold pack or ice in a bag with a layer of protection over the skin by using a cloth and again avoid heavy lifting or manual work as outlined above. You may experience discomfort associated with the bruising.

Nerve Injury / Nerve irritation / Pain

You must tell us immediately if you have any of the following when the needle is inserted, during the donation or after the needle is removed (1/813):

- pain
- discomfort
- altered sensation in your arm, hand or fingers

Very infrequently, insertion or removal of the needle may cause irritation (1/3,703) or injury of a nerve in your arm (1/8,333). Pain, discomfort or altered sensation in your arm, hand or fingers may indicate that a nerve has been injured.

These symptoms may also occur if a collection of blood under the skin (bruise) is pressing on a nerve. Tell us immediately if you have any of these symptoms and we will stop the donation and give you the appropriate advice.

Symptoms may occur after you have left the donor clinic. One in 141,429 continues to have pain for more than a year after donating.

Tendon Injury / Pain

On rare occasions, a needle may come into contact with a tendon and cause a sharp pain when the needle is inserted. Tell us immediately if you experience any pain or discomfort when the needle is inserted and we will stop the donation. No tendon injuries were recorded in the **IBTS** in 2017.

Bleeding from the Needle site

Sometimes blood will start to leak from the needle site after the donation is finished (1/352). If this happens, lift your arm above your shoulder and apply firm pressure until the bleeding stops, a staff member will apply another plaster as required. Leave the plaster on the site until the next day to prevent infection.

Fainting / feeling lightheaded

Some donors may feel faint (1/99) after donating and a small number faint (lose consciousness) (1/833). There are a number of things that you and our staff can do to minimise this risk so please follow their advice on clinic. If you were to faint on clinic our staff are trained to look after you and will not let you leave the clinic until you are fully recovered. They will also give you an information leaflet with advice prior to going home. If you were to experience a head injury as a result of a faint you would be referred to hospital from the clinic. If you feel faint after leaving the clinic, lie down straight away and drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids.

Arterial Puncture

Rarely (1/10,000), the needle may inadvertently be inserted into an artery. If this happens the needle will be removed immediately and you will be given immediate treatment and appropriate advice.

Uncommon risks of donation

We collect around 130,000 donations of blood every year. About once or twice a year a donor may need to be admitted to hospital as a result of a complication of giving blood. This could occur if for example a donor faints and bangs his / her head resulting in an injury. There is a very remote risk of Stroke or Death; however no-one has ever died in Ireland due to blood donation.

In the unlikely event that you experience a fast / irregular pulse or tightness in the chest this may not necessarily be caused by the donation. If it does occur during or after donation let us know immediately.

A horizontal row of eight colored squares: pink, blue, orange, light blue, green, purple, red, and dark green.