

Deciding to give blood is quite possibly more difficult than the action itself. Anxiety about a new experience and fear of the unknown causes many people to think twice about giving blood.

Be assured: Giving blood is safe, easy and it saves lives. Since the needle is sterile and used only once, it is impossible to contract any disease by donating blood.

To donate you must be at least 17 years old, in good health and weigh at least 110 pounds. A good meal is recommended prior to your donation. The donation process involves four steps and takes about an hour.

### **1. Registration**

Valid identification, such as a driver's license, is needed. You will also be asked for your name, address, phone number and Social Security Number.

### **2. Medical History and Mini-Physical**

A medical interviewer will ask you a series of confidential medical questions to determine your eligibility to donate. Then, your temperature, pulse, blood pressure and iron level will be checked. Low iron is the most common cause of blood donor deferral. To avoid low iron donors should eat iron rich foods (see iron rich food insert in this packet).

### **3. The Blood Donation**

A nurse will gently cleanse and sterilize your arm before inserting a needle that will cause a slight, momentary sting. The needle is sterile, used only for your donation, then disposed. After five to seven minutes, you will have given a lifesaving pint of blood to a patient in need.

### **4. Rest and Refreshments**

Relax and enjoy fruit juice, donuts and assorted snacks for 15 minutes. Indulge yourself for a deed well done!

In the 24 hours after your visit, your blood donation will be tested, typed and separated into various components to be safely transfused to as many as two patients.

# The Blood Donation Process