A guide to blood donation

Georgia Health Policy Center

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A GUIDE TO BLOOD DONATION

Are you considering donating blood? Here is a step-by-step guide and a few tips to make your donation process run smoothly. The entire process will take an hour or less.

Before you donate . . .
• avoid alcohol consumption
• avoid over-the-counter medications
• avoid smoking and the use of tobacco products
• drink plenty of fluids
• eat healthy iron-rich foods
• get plenty of rest the night before

After you donate . . .
• avoid exercising
• avoid smoking
• drink plenty of fluids
• eat healthy iron-rich foods

1 Arrival
Once you arrive at the center or drive you will show identification and fill out a brief health and travel history form.

2 Screening
• The staff will ask a few questions about your health and travel history.
• A mini exam will be performed, including a finger prick and recording of your temperature, weight, and blood pressure.
• If your mini physical and health and travel history are acceptable, you will be able to donate blood.

3 Donation
After the mini exam, the actual donation will take less than 10 minutes.

4 Snack Time
Rest, relax, and enjoy a snack and drink before you leave.

5 Repeat
Blood donation does not need to be a one-time thing. You can donate as often as every 56 days or eight weeks.