

## Health Benefits of Donating Blood

### Reduce the chance of heart diseases

Did you know that you can reduce your risk of heart disease and save a life at the same time? That's right! According to studies published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, blood donors are 88% less likely to suffer a heart attack and 33% less likely to suffer any type of cardiovascular event. Why is that? Well, researchers aren't 100% sure, but believe it may be due to either one of two things.

The first theory is that blood donors must be considered "healthy" before they roll up their sleeve, so they are less likely to suffer heart disease because they are already in good health and probably have lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels those non-blood donors.

The second theory is that iron has a significant impact on atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries. When you give blood you are removing 225 to 250 milligrams of iron from your system, thus cutting your risk of heart disease.

Pre-menopausal women tend to have half of the amount of iron as men because they lose iron every month through menstruation. Coincidentally, they also suffer half as many heart attacks.

However, once a woman goes through menopause her risk of heart attack increases, but donating blood can reduce that risk.

In addition to depleting iron levels, when you donate blood we give you a free mini-physical and let you know your blood pressure as well as you cholesterol levels-two major risk factors when it comes to heart disease.

While scientists are researching why donating blood reduces the risk of heart attack, one thing is clear-donating blood has many benefits to the donor as well as the recipient. So, if you want to pick up a healthy habit, head over to your local blood center and give the gift of life.

Plus, when donors give blood they receive a cholesterol test and a mini-physical that can catch certain illnesses in the early stages. Florida's Blood Centers tests blood from donors for numerous diseases including HIV 1 and 2, West Nile Virus, Syphilis, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, T. Cruzi or Chagas as well as the Human T-Cell Lymphotropic Virus 1 and 2.

### ENHANCES THE PRODUCTION OF NEW BLOOD CELLS

When blood is withdrawn, the donor's body immediately begins to replenish the lost blood. New cells are produced by marrow within 48 hours of donation, and all of the red blood cells the donor loses during donation are completely replaced within one to two months. Therefore, donating blood helps to stimulate the production of new blood cells. This process of replenishment can help your body stay healthy and work more efficiently.

#### **BURNS CALORIES**

Donating blood on a regular basis can also improve fitness. Donating one pint of blood (450 ml) burns 650 calories in donor's body.

#### **ENHANCES FEELING OF WELL BEING IN ELDERLY PEOPLE**

Many elderly people who are in good health have reported feeling invigorated and reenergized by giving blood on a regular basis.

#### **REDUCES CANCER RISK**

Give blood to help lower your risk of cancer. According to the Miller-Keystone Blood Center, consistent blood donation is associated with lowered risks of cancers, including liver, lung, colon, stomach and throat cancers. Risk levels drop in correlation with how often participants donate blood.

#### **FREE HEALTH SCREENING DONE**

Apart from all these benefits a donor gets a mini blood test done before donating blood. This includes Hematocrit i.e. HB level test, Blood pressure is measured, body weight is checked. After the blood is collected it tested for 5 major diseases. Those are Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV, Syphilis and malaria. Donor is immediately informed if any of these test found to be positive.



***Give blood to someone who needs it and do your own body good at the same time.***