

# Frequently Asked Questions About Donor Eligibility

To determine if you are eligible to donate, you will be asked to answer donor screening questions, have a confidential evaluation of your responses and an evaluation of your vital signs. Listed below are the most commonly asked questions about donor eligibility. If you have a question that is not listed below, please do not hesitate to contact the Central Illinois Community Blood Center toll-free at 1-866-GIVE-BLD x 143.

**Q. Can I donate blood if I am taking medication?**

A. In most cases, yes. If you are on medication to control a minor health problem, it probably will not disqualify you from donating blood. Vitamins, birth control pills, blood pressure medication, cholesterol medication, hormones, allergy medication and aspirin usually do not disqualify you from donating blood. Acceptable antibiotics include those taken for acne, rosacea and prevention of urinary tract infections. If you are taking antibiotics or any other medication for an infection, you may not donate until 48 hours after the last dose and you have no more symptoms of infection.

**Q. What if I am diabetic?**

A. You may donate blood as long as your diabetes is under control with diet and/or medication. If you have used Bovine “beef insulin” anytime since 1980, then you will not be able to donate.

**Q. What if I recently had surgery?**

A. Each case will be evaluated on an individual basis. If you are feeling well, are completely healed, have resumed normal activities and did not receive any blood products, you may qualify to donate blood. If you received a blood transfusion (unless it was your own blood), you will have to wait one year after the date of surgery.

**Q. What if I had cancer?**

A. You may be able to donate blood if you are currently in good health, your cancer treatment was completed over one year ago and you have not had any recurrences of the disease. However, if you have had melanoma, multiple myeloma, mycosis fungoides, leukemia or a lymphoma (Hodgkin’s disease or Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma) or Kaposi’s sarcoma, you will not be able to donate.

**Q. What if I had a heart attack or heart surgery?**

A. You may donate one year after a heart attack or cardiac bypass surgery and/or angioplasty (balloon) or stent if: you are not symptomatic, have no limitation of activities, are not on cardiac medication (except high blood pressure and/or anti-platelet medications) and you bring in written approval from your personal physician, prior to your first donation, that says your health is acceptable to donate. Written approval from your personal physician is not needed if the date of event or date of last symptom was three years ago and the conditions mentioned above are met.

**Q. What if I had hepatitis?**

A. Viral Hepatitis, after the age of 11, permanently disqualifies you from blood donation. Hepatitis vaccines require a one week wait if taken for prevention. Having close/intimate contact with someone who has hepatitis disqualifies you from blood donation for 12 months from last contact. If you have been exposed to food prepared/handled by an individual with hepatitis A, or exposed to hepatitis A in a daycare setting, you must wait four months to be eligible to donate.

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CENTRAL ILLINOIS  
COMMUNITY BLOOD CENTER

*give what's in your heart.*

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Ref#: ME.08.0.5

*Frequently Asked Questions About Donor Eligibility continued...*

**Q. What if I have traveled or lived outside of the United States or Canada?**

A. It is best to check with Blood Center staff for information on specific travel destinations, especially in tropical areas and Europe.

Travel to **major resort areas** such as Cancun, Acapulco, Puerto Vallarta, Cozumel and border cities in Mexico are **acceptable**.

If you spent more than six months on a **military base** between 1980 and 1990 in Germany, Belgium or the Netherlands, or between 1980 and 1996 in Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Italy or Greece, you **will not** be able to donate.

**Q. What if I recently had an ear or body piercing?**

A. If it is healed and was done with disposable and sterile supplies, you may donate. If not, you must wait 12 months.

**Q. What if I recently had a tattoo?**

A. If you've received a tattoo in a licensed facility in a regulated state you may donate. Check with Blood Center staff to determine if you've received a tattoo in a regulated state. Tattoos received in Illinois **after** January 1, 2010 are **acceptable**. A tattoo in Illinois **prior** to January 1, 2010 requires a 12-month deferral.

**Q. What if I am pregnant?**

A. You must wait for at least six weeks following the end of pregnancy. It is acceptable to donate while still breast-feeding.

**Q. What if I recently got a shot or immunization?**

A. Flu and allergy shots are acceptable. Flu mist nasal spray is acceptable. Other shots and vaccinations may be cause for deferral. Check with Blood Center staff.

**Q. What if I have recently donated blood?**

A. You must wait eight weeks between whole blood donations and 16 weeks between double red cell donations.

**Q. What are the age limits?**

A. Age 17 with no upper age limit. Sixteen-year-olds are allowed to donate blood with a signed parental consent form, which may be downloaded from the Central Illinois Community Blood Center's Web site, [www.CICBC.org](http://www.CICBC.org).

**Q. What are the weight requirements?**

A. A donor must weigh at least 110 pounds for whole blood donation. For double red cell donation males must weigh at least 130 pounds and females at least 150 pounds.

**Q. Should I eat and drink before donating blood?**

A. Yes, you should eat within three to four hours before donating blood. Also, drink plenty of fluids before and after you donate.

**Q. What if I am not feeling well?**

A. You must be feeling well to donate blood.

**Q. What about dental procedures?**

A. You may donate if you've had your teeth cleaned, cavities filled (non-invasive), oral radiographs, an oral impression, postoperative suture removal or a crown seated. Having recent dental surgery may be cause for deferral. Check with Blood Center staff.



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