



### Parental Consent For Blood Donations

Your child can make a lifesaving difference to people in our community by giving less than an hour of their time at Mercy's upcoming blood drive. The need for blood to meet the hospital's patient needs is growing. Your child's donation is a lifesaving gift for Mercy Hospital patients. The process is safe, easy, and rewarding.

Donors may give blood at the age of sixteen with the written consent of a parent or legal guardian. They must also meet other blood donation requirements before donating, which include a minimum weight of 115 pounds and general good health. Please be assured that every blood donor is thoroughly evaluated prior to donation to ensure that they meet these requirements.

There are three steps to the donation process:

- 1. Medical Evaluation** - Ensures safety for both the blood donor and recipient. A series of self-administered questions will pre-qualify a potential donor. All donor information is kept strictly confidential. A short physical exam will record blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and hemoglobin levels. Post-donation, a ferritin level (an indicator of body iron stores) will be checked with the donated unit. If the ferritin level is low, indicating low body iron stores, notification will be sent via mail. See Predonation Information on Iron Deficiency and Maintaining Iron Balance.
- 2. Blood Draw** - Usually takes between five to ten minutes. Blood Donor Services staff will use only sterile, disposable equipment to draw one unit (approximately one pint) of blood. After the procedure is complete, the arm will be cleaned and bandaged.
- 3. Refreshment and Relaxation** - Over the next 10-15 minutes, donors are encouraged to spend the time in the refreshment area. Snacks and drinks are provided to replenish fluid and energy levels.

Most donors feel fine throughout this process. However, occasionally a donor may experience weakness, dizziness, fainting or bruising. Please note: To help prepare for donation, your child should eat a meal and drink plenty of fluids at least two hours prior to donating.

If you have any question or concern about blood donation, please contact us at 314-251-4483.

**Please fill out completely. THIS FORM IS REQUIRED FOR BLOOD DONATION BY 16-YEAR OLD DONORS.**

**Donor Unit Number**

**Parent/Legal Guardian:** Please complete this section and sign **in indelible ink**. The donor's legal name and last four digits of the Social Security number is required. Please do not use abbreviations or nicknames. A new consent is required for each donation until age 17. A picture ID with date of birth for donors (two other forms of ID with proof of age are also acceptable).

I understand that my child will be notified by mail of positive test results(s) and for follow-up testing if necessary. Additionally, if blood tests reveal evidence of reportable infectious disease, I understand that Mercy Hospital St. Louis Blood Donor Services may inform the appropriate government agencies and anyone else permitted by law. I also understand that there are certain risks associated with these procedures including, but not limited to, fainting, bruising, nerve injury, and anemia.

I have read and understood the information provided on this form about blood donation. I give my consent for \_\_\_\_\_ to donate blood.

**(Please Print)** First Name                      Middle Initial                      Last Name

Donor's Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please Print

Parent/Legal Guardian Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Predonation Information on Iron Deficiency and Maintaining Iron Balance

**Thank you for donating blood today. Because red blood cells contain iron, donating blood lowers your body's iron stores.**

- All blood donors are at risk for developing iron deficiency if the iron removed is not replaced before the next donation. Iron stores may be low even if your hemoglobin level is sufficient to donate blood.
- Some donors are at increased risk:
  - o Young donors, 16 to 25 years old
  - o Pre-menopausal women (due to menstrual blood loss)
  - o Frequent donors
    - WOMEN who donate 2 or more whole blood donations in a 12-month period
    - MEN who donate 3 or more whole blood donations in a 12-month period
    - Very frequent (or volunteer but not paid plasma) platelet donors (> 12 times per year)
    - Donors on plant-based diets

**The following information will help you maintain healthy iron levels by replacing the iron lost during blood donation:**

- A healthy, iron-rich diet helps, but cannot replace iron losses in just a few months without supplements.
- You may consider taking a multivitamin with iron or an iron supplement containing 18-38 mg (milligrams) of elemental iron each day for 60 days after donating whole blood or one apheresis red blood cell and after every 5 apheresis platelet/ (volunteer) plasma donations. Your healthcare provider or pharmacist can help you choose the type of iron that is best for you and suggest when to take it to avoid interaction with other medications.
- If you donate double red cells, we suggest taking iron for at least 60 days. It may take up to 120 days to replace the iron removed in two red cell donations.
- If you prefer not to take supplements, you may choose to extend the time between red blood cell donations. At least 6 months may be needed for donors with already-low iron stores.

**Are there additional concerns for younger donors?**

- Teens' iron stores are typically lower than those of older adults. It is especially important for 16, 17 and 18-year-old donors to take iron after donating blood.
- The body's iron stores support healthy brain development. Because development continues through the mid-20s, it may be advisable for 19 to 25-year-old donors to take iron.

**How can I tell if my iron is low?**

- The finger prick test done prior to donation checks to make sure that you have enough red blood cells to safely donate blood, it does not guarantee adequate iron stores.
- Many people with low iron stores feel fine and have no symptoms.
- Some people feel tired, lack energy and endurance, or have trouble concentrating.
- The desire to eat non-food substances like ice, chalk, starch, or clay can suggest iron deficiency.
- A ferritin blood test can be performed by your healthcare provider to tell if your iron is low.

**What should I know about taking iron?**

- People with a family or personal history of hemochromatosis (iron overload), or who have gastrointestinal disorders (i.e. inflammatory bowel disease), should not take iron unless approved by a healthcare provider.
- Start iron soon after your donation when it's best absorbed and used to produce red blood cells lost during your donation.
- Taking iron with vitamin C (drinking orange juice) may increase uptake of iron.
- Avoid taking iron with dairy products, coffee, tea, or eggs.
- Higher doses will not increase iron absorption, may result in more side effects, and could delay diagnosis of blood loss from gastric ulcers or colon cancer.
- Iron should always be stored away from children and pets to prevent accidental poisoning.