

Someone's *life* depends on *YOU*.

Questions and answers about donating automated red cells

How long will this donation take?

- The donation will take about 35 to 40 minutes and uses a cell separator. Your double red cell donation will take only about 15 to 20 minutes longer than a whole blood donation. The double red cell donation might actually even save you time, because we'll ask you to donate less frequently.

Where are automated donations available?

- Automated donations are being collected in a growing number of blood centers and mobile drives around the country. Using this state-of-the-art technology puts Virginia Blood Services at the forefront of transfusion medicine.

Is this type of donation safe?

- Just like a whole blood donation, there is no risk of contracting any disease by donating automated red cell products for patients.

Can I work after donating?

- As long as your work does not involve heavy lifting or strenuous activity, there should not be any problem with routine work.

Why should I donate this way instead of giving whole blood the traditional way?

- You will be able to help two patients urgently needing red blood cells because your donation will result in two full therapeutic doses for patients (two units of red cells).
- You may be more comfortable with an automated donation because this procedure uses a smaller needle. Virginia Blood Services can selectively collect donor components based on patient needs.
- Virginia Blood Services will be able to react more quickly to possible emergencies or crisis.



What are the requirements to donate an automated red cell donation?

- Donors should be in good health, be 16 years old and have a minimum hematocrit of 40 percent. Written parental consent is required for 16-year-old donors.
- Men must weigh at least 130 pounds and be at least 5'1" tall. Women must weigh at least 150 pounds and be at least 5'5" tall. If you have a specific medical condition or are on medication, please discuss your particular situation with the staff during your medical history interview.

How often can I donate?

- You are eligible to donate every 112 days (or 16 weeks), which is half as often as for a regular whole blood donation.

Is the screening process different from that of the screening process for whole blood donors?

- No. The medical review is the same for both.

Can I get someone else's blood with this procedure?

- No, as with whole blood donations, each donation is performed using a sterile, individual use, disposable kit. This disposable kit fits in the cell separator and is only used once. After the procedure, it is thrown away.
- Your blood only comes in contact with the sterile, individual use disposable kit. You cannot get a disease from donating this way.