

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

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## **Bruising**

A bruise (hematoma in medical terminology) is an escape of blood into surrounding tissues underneath the layers of the skin.

The instructions given at the end of your donation can help deter bruising:

- Keep your arm dry and the bandage in place for four to five hours.
- If you notice a bruise appearing, apply ice to the phlebotomy site for short periods of time within 24 hours of your donation.
- If the site is sore or stiff the next day, apply moist heat.

When a needle is introduced into a vein, it makes a small hole in the wall of the vein. While the needle is in place, there is little or no leakage of blood from around the puncture site. However, after the needle is withdrawn, the hole in the wall of the vein might not close off immediately. A bruise may also occur if the puncture later reopens, causing leakage of blood into the tissue underneath the skin.

Eventually, the escaped blood will be absorbed back into your body. This usually takes from two to three days but sometimes as long as seven to ten days. During the absorption process, color changes might occur, depending on several factors, among them how much blood escaped into the tissue, how deep the blood pooled and how quickly your body absorbs the blood.

*If you have any questions about donating blood, please do not hesitate to contact our Customer Service Advocate at (804) 213-4214 or (800) 989-2201. Your comfort and well-being are important to us.*

