

Our Blood Saves Lives. Donate Today.

Boost Your Iron for a Great Donation Experience

When donating blood, it's important to maintain healthy iron levels. Iron is an essential mineral in hemoglobin, a protein in your body that contains iron and carries oxygen to your organs and tissues. The American Red Cross checks your hemoglobin before you donate blood to be sure it's safe for you to give. Low hemoglobin is one of the most frequent reasons why blood donors who are Black and African American are asked to wait to donate.

Hemoglobin ranges are different for men and women and can differ by race and ethnicity.

The normal range for men is 13.5 to 17.5 g/dL and for women, it is 12.0 to 15.5 g/dL.

African American individuals can have a normal hemoglobin level that is lower than this range.

**There are ways you can boost your iron and prepare for your next blood donation.
Consider preparing for your next donation with these helpful tips.**

Eat the Right Foods



A diet with plenty of iron-rich foods like red meat, fish, beans, poultry and spinach can replace iron in cells between donations.



Foods that are high in vitamin C, like oranges, can help your body absorb the iron you eat.



Avoid coffee, tea and caffeinated drinks with meals—they can reduce iron absorption.

Consider a Multivitamin



Talk to your healthcare provider to determine if taking a multivitamin with at least 18 mg of iron or iron supplement is right for you.

Your body loses iron during the blood donation process. A multivitamin with iron, or an iron supplement, can help prepare for your donation and replenish your body's iron after donating. Start preparing in the weeks leading up to your donation.

You can learn more about iron levels and blood donations at RedCrossBlood.org/iron

The Day Of The Donation

Before your donation, the Red Cross will test a droplet of your blood to measure your hemoglobin level.

To help ensure it is safe for you to donate, men must have a level of at least 13.0g/dL and women must have a level of at least 12.5g/dL. If your hemoglobin is too low, we'll ask you to wait and try to donate another time. You can try again, and following these tips may help you prepare. For even more helpful information, visit RedCrossBlood.org/iron.

We can't wait to see you at your next blood donation appointment!

To schedule a blood donation, visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS today!

