What type of hero are you?

Directed Blood Donor

Be a hero. Donate blood.

UCLA Health System
What is directed donor blood?

Patients who may need a transfusion can ask a friend or relative to donate blood specifically for them. Blood from these donors is called directed donor blood. This blood is reserved for the intended patient, provided it is “blood type compatible.” If the directed donor’s blood is not compatible, and therefore not safe for the patient, the directed donation will be made available for another patient. In this way, directed donor units also help ensure that there is an adequate blood supply for all our patients.

Does a patient need directed donor blood?

The decision to use directed donations in place of volunteer community blood donations should be made after discussing the patient’s blood requirements with his or her physician. The UCLA Blood & Platelet Center will meet the patient’s transfusion needs whether or not he or she chooses to have directed donors. The UCLA Blood & Platelet Center routinely stocks units of blood collected from volunteer community donors. This blood is available to all patients who need a transfusion.

Are there extra charges for directed donor blood?

No, there are no additional charges to the patient or the donor for directed donor blood if the donation is collected and processed at UCLA.
How safe is directed donor blood?

While directed donations are sometimes perceived to be safer than blood collected from volunteer community donations, there is no current scientific information that suggests this is true. Units from both directed and community donors are screened and tested in exactly the same way for diseases that can be transmitted by blood, including but not limited to different kinds of hepatitis, HIV, HTLV-I/II and syphilis.

What does the patient need to do?

First, the patient should discuss this option with his or her doctor. If the decision is made to use directed donations, the doctor must send a request to the UCLA Blood & Platelet Center. Before an appointment can be scheduled for any directed donors, the patient must have a hospital ID number. To obtain an ID number, the patient must call the admissions department of the appropriate facility:

**Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center (Westwood):** (310) 267-8000, option 1

**Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center and Orthopaedic Hospital:** (310) 319-4115

Next, the patient should call the UCLA Blood & Platelet Center at (310) 825-0888 to speak with a member of our directed donor office staff, who will answer all questions and coordinate all directed donations.

Then, the patient asks potential donors to call the UCLA Blood & Platelet Center to make appointments to donate.
What does the directed donor need to do?

A directed donor should call the UCLA Blood & Platelet Center at (310) 825-0888 to schedule an appointment no less than three days before the scheduled transfusion. All donors need to show a photo ID prior to donating blood.

Who can give a directed donation?

To qualify, donors must meet all required blood donation standards, including:

• Be at least 17 years old. Donors under the age of 17 require parental consent. No upper limit.

• Weigh at least 110 pounds.

• Be in good general health.

• No fever, cold, flu, sore throat or any other infection on the day of donation.

• Have not taken antibiotics for an infection within 48 hours prior to donating.

• No history of hepatitis.

• Never used intravenous drugs.
• Have not had sex with another man (even once) since 1977.
• Have not traveled to a malaria risk area in the past 12 months.
• Have not had certain types of piercings in the past 12 months.
• Have not had a tattoo in the past 12 months.
• Must not be the husband or boyfriend of the patient if female recipient is of childbearing age (blood from a husband or boyfriend could complicate future pregnancies).

In addition to the above requirements, platelet donors must also meet the following:

• Have a good vein in at least one arm.
• Have not taken aspirin-like medications or anti-inflammatory drugs. (e.g., Excedrin, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Advil, Nuprin, Naprosyn, certain cold/flu medicines, some cough syrups and other similar medications) three days prior to the donation. Plain Tylenol (acetaminophen) is acceptable.
• Females with a history of four or more pregnancies (including miscarriages and abortions) may not donate platelets, but they are able to donate whole blood.
• Must be willing to allow approximately 2½ hours for the entire donation process.

The above list is not complete. For a complete list, including travel restrictions, and to make an appointment to donate, please call (310) 825-0888 or go to: www.gotblood.ucla.edu.
# How often can a unit of blood be donated?

Blood can be donated once every 56 days (eight weeks). In special cases, directed donors may be allowed to give blood more frequently for the same patient. The donor must meet all eligibility requirements (including the minimum hemoglobin level) and be approved by the medical director as a frequent directed donor.

# What units will be blood type compatible?

Donor blood group is determined after a unit of blood is collected. Only directed donor units that are compatible with the patient’s blood type are reserved. Other units are released to the general blood supply for use by another patient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient blood type</th>
<th>Compatible red cells</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O Pos</td>
<td>O Pos or O Neg</td>
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<tr>
<td>O Neg</td>
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<td>A Pos</td>
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<td>A Neg</td>
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<td>AB Pos or AB Neg, A Pos or A Neg, B Pos or B Neg, O Pos or O Neg</td>
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<td>AB Neg</td>
<td>AB Neg, A Neg, B Neg, O Neg</td>
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</tbody>
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*The chart lists compatible blood types for red blood cell transfusions only and is not applicable for platelet and plasma transfusion.*
How soon should the donations be made?

Units are usually available for transfusion three days after donation, provided they test negative for infectious diseases. For adults and children at least 4 months old having surgery, it is recommended that directed donations for red blood cells be made one to three weeks before surgery. For babies less than 4 months old, donations must be made 10 days or less before the scheduled date of surgery.

How does a patient know how many directed donor units are reserved?

Only the number of units requested by the physician will be held in reserve. Patients (or a family member) are responsible for keeping track of the number of reserved directed donor units and may call the UCLA Blood Bank at (310) 267-8150 for the number of units available for the patient. Remember that not all donors may be eligible to donate, and some donated units may not be available because they were not compatible or did not pass testing requirements. Donor screening and testing results are absolutely confidential and given only to the donor.
What if enough directed donors can’t be recruited to meet the patient’s needs?

If an adequate number of qualified donors for the patient’s transfusion needs cannot be recruited, or if additional blood or blood components are ordered by the patient’s physician, the additional units will be provided by the UCLA Blood Bank from volunteer community donors.

How long can blood be stored?

National standards dictate the maximum time a unit of blood can be stored. Whole blood is separated into red blood cells (RBCs) and frozen plasma (FP). RBCs are stored for 35 or 42 days, depending on the collection system used. FP is kept frozen for one year. Some processing steps and special modifications requested by doctors can shorten these storage times.

How long will directed donor units be reserved for a specific patient?

Directed donor units (RBCs and/or FP) are held until five days before the RBC unit expires. Then, they are automatically released to the general supply for other patients to use.
In what order will reserved units be used?

Autologous units (collected when a patient donates his or her own blood) are transfused first. Directed donor units are used next. The order in which directed units are used is determined by the blood type and unit expiration only. If additional blood is needed after directed donor units are transfused, blood from the volunteer community supply will be used.

Can donations be made elsewhere?

Directed donations can be made at outside donor centers and shipped to UCLA. The processing and transport of these “outside” units may take up to one week, and there may be shipping and handling fees. The patient and his or her physician will need to make advance arrangements with the facility where the blood will be collected. Billing policies vary with each outside center. UCLA does not pay for units to be shipped from another collection facility.

What if directed donors donate blood at the UCLA Blood & Platelet Center and the patient’s surgery or medical treatment isn’t performed at a UCLA hospital?

If directed donor blood has already been donated, immediately notify the UCLA Blood Bank at (310) 267-8150. Transporting blood to other hospitals requires extra time and may add additional costs. If it is possible, these units may be transferred to any requested facility in California.
What about directed donor platelets?

Some patients, especially those receiving chemotherapy and undergoing heart surgery, require platelet transfusions. If a patient’s doctor orders platelets, directed donations by friends and relatives are encouraged. Platelets can be stored for five days. It is preferable to donate platelets three days prior to the scheduled procedure and transfusion.

Platelet donors must meet the same criteria as whole blood donors. In addition, they must weigh at least 110 pounds and have a good vein in at least one arm.

Platelets are collected by apheresis, which uses a medical device called a cell separator to process the donor’s blood, collect the platelets and return the remaining blood to the donor. The entire process takes about 2½ hours. A directed donor may give platelets twice a week.

Be a hero. Make a blood donation.
Katherine Arnold Wolf was enjoying a successful modeling and acting career in California. Her husband, Jay, was finishing a law degree, and their infant son was thriving. But everything changed in an instant, when Katherine suffered a rupture of an arteriovenous malformation (AVM) at the base of her brain. Deeply religious, Katherine, Jay and even her doctors use the word “miracle” to describe how she survived the rupture and 16 hours of subsequent surgery — a surgery that required a staggering 10 percent of UCLA’s blood resources used that day. Her steady progress learning to eat and walk again, chronicled on www.katherinewolf.info, has captured a huge following.

“We are eternally grateful for all UCLA has meant and continues to mean to us. The blood bank is certainly near the top of our list of things that we all take for granted but are unbelievably thankful to have access to when we need it. Without such a readily available supply of blood, Katherine would very likely not be here today.”

— Jay Wolf, husband
How easy will it be to park and find the UCLA Blood & Platelet Center?

We are located at 1045 Gayley Avenue, two blocks north of Wilshire Blvd. between Kinross and Weyburn avenues. We have several parking options available:

• Lot 1 (at UCLA Medical Plaza)
• Lot 32 (one block north of Wilshire Blvd.)

We do not validate parking for any of the public lots. When you call for an appointment, please discuss the parking options or visit our website at www.gotblood.ucla.edu.