

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

FOR PARENTS, SCHOOL HEALTH PROVIDERS AND FACULTY

Congratulations on becoming a life-saving partner in our community! Young, healthy donors are a key part of having an adequate blood supply here and throughout the country. We work every day to ensure life-saving blood is available for everyone who needs it. In doing so, the safety of blood donors and the blood supply is of paramount importance to us.

Working together, we can help ensure a positive experience for blood donors at your drive. Below are some important facts to support a successful donation experience for young donors.

Before blood donation

- Each student should eat well, preferably 60 to 90 minutes before donating. Having only a Pop Tart for breakfast at 7 a.m. and then donating at noon is NOT a good idea.
- Students should also drink extra fluids prior to and after donating. Although being hydrated is important, recent research notes that providing 8 to 12 ounces of room temperature water to students just prior to donation (after temperature and finger-stick) gives an added bonus providing Positive Gastric Distention which, in short, is putting a little extra pressure on the gut to raise blood pressure enough to keep most students from feeling "light-headed" from the fluid loss of a pint of whole blood or packed red cells.

During blood donation

- Most reactions are caused by extreme nervousness. These vasovagal reactions can usually be avoided if the student remains calm and focuses on slow, rhythmic breathing.

- Our team is trained to notice early signs of a reaction (light headedness, yawning or becoming hot and sweating) and to intervene. Advise students to let us know immediately if they feel different so precautions can be taken (head lowered and legs elevated, ice pack, distraction).
- Should fainting occur it is usually a self-correcting condition where normal circulation to the brain resumes. As long as the person recovers quickly and has no lasting signals, it should not be necessary to call EMS. Our team is trained in first aid and will recognize conditions in which additional care would be necessary (prolonged loss of consciousness or prolonged vomiting).

After the donation

We appreciate your support that students should SIT, SIP, and SNACK!

- Donors should arise from the donor bed slowly and sit on the side of the bed. Then, each donor is to remain in the refreshment area at least 15 minutes, relaxing and enjoying refreshments.
- If the student begins to feel light-headed or dizzy after leaving the donation area, he or she should sit or lie on the floor immediately to avoid falling and send someone for help. If our team is still in the facility, they will come to the aid of the student.
- First aid measures include lowering the head then elevating the legs and feet to improve venous return. The donor should be encouraged to breathe deeply (inhaling through the nose/exhaling through the mouth) to improve oxygenation. The student needs to lie quietly for a while after a brief fainting or near-fainting episode. They will usually feel

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better soon after resting and drinking more fluids.

- All donors should heed instructions to “make your next meal a good one” and to “drink plenty of fluids for the next several hours.”
- Normal activity need not be routinely restricted, but strenuous exercise and heavy weight lifting should be avoided for several hours. If the student feels tired or has experienced a fainting episode, encourage them to “take it easy” until they feel restored.
- Bruising can result when blood accumulates beneath the skin. To minimize this, we instruct donors to hold pressure on the site by putting the thumb under the elbow and hold the gauze firmly with three fingers, while lifting the arm straight up as if to answer a question in school. The bandage applied immediately after the donation should be left on for at least two hours. Most painless bruising should not be a cause for great concern. If the bruise is not causing pain and it is soft, it will begin to spread and turn different colors as the capillaries beneath the skin begin to absorb the blood that has accumulated. If the bruise is painful or if a hard knot develops, please call the blood center for follow-up instructions.
- If the parent, student or faculty becomes concerned about any post-donation experience, they should call their local LifeShare Blood Center to discuss their concerns and to obtain further instructions if needed.

Follow up

- Blood Center personnel will follow-up with a phone call to any student who has experienced a reaction, no matter how mild. This gives the student (or parent) a chance to discuss any concerns that may have developed. If we cannot reach the student or a parent (usually the next day), a letter will be sent to inquire about the recovery.

Donating blood is a safe way for students to make a positive difference in our community. Usually, any initial feelings of fear or nervousness are overcome and replaced with the reward of knowing that their donation provided an irreplaceable medical treatment to save or improve another’s life.

lifeshare.org-Text DONATE to 444-999 to receive texts from LifeShare Blood Centers

Donor Centers: **LOUISIANA** ALEXANDRIA 2051 North Mall Drive 318.445.7439 ▪ **BATON ROUGE** 3849 North Boulevard 225.383.7728
▪ **BOSSIER CITY** 1523 Doctors Drive 318.742.4636 ▪ **LAKE CHARLES** 214 Dr. Michael DeBakey Drive 337.436.4932
▪ **MONROE** 2909 Kilpatrick Boulevard 318.322.4445 ▪ **SHREVEPORT** 8910 Linwood Avenue 318.673.1471
TEXAS BEAUMONT 4305 Laurel Street 409.838.5289 ▪ **TEXARKANA** 4020 Summerhill Road 903.794.3173

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We connect donors and the lives they impact.

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