

Blood donation

A blood donation occurs when a healthy person voluntarily has blood drawn. The blood is used for transfusions. Donating is relatively safe, but some donors have bruising where the needle is inserted or may feel faint.

Potential donors are evaluated for anything that might make their blood unsafe to use. The screening includes testing for diseases that can be transmitted by a blood transfusion, including HIV and viral hepatitis. The donor is also asked about medical history and given a short physical examination to make sure that the donation is not hazardous to his or her health. How often a donor can give varies from days to months based on what he or she donates and the laws of the country where the donation takes place. For example, in the United States, donors must wait 8 weeks (56 days) between whole blood donations.

The amount of blood drawn and the methods vary, but a typical donation is 500 milliliters (one US pint) of whole blood. The collection can be done manually or with automated equipment that only takes specific portions of the blood. Most of the components of blood used for transfusions have a short shelf life, and maintaining a constant supply is a persistent problem.

Benefits of donating blood.

1. In patients prone to iron overload, blood donation prevents the accumulation of toxic quantities.
2. Donating blood may reduce the risk of heart disease for men, reducing the chance of heart attack to one third.
3. Also, donating one pint of blood causes the donor to burn approximately 650 calories.
4. Donating blood may not only benefit the person who received the blood cells but may also improve the health of the donor.
5. While the most obvious health benefit of donating blood is the wonderful feeling derived from giving something vital to someone who needs it, the benefits of donating blood may extend far beyond this to having a positive impact on the donor's health.
6. Enhance the production of new Red Blood Cells. As the blood is withdrawn from the donors body there is decrease in blood cells. Therefore donating blood helps in stimulating generation of new blood cells.

Other benefit

Apart from all these benefits a donor gets a mini blood test done before donating blood. This includes Hematocrit i.e. HB level test, blood pressure is measured, body weight is checked. After the blood is collected, it is tested for 5 major diseases. Those are Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV, Syphilis and malaria. Donor is immediately informed if any of these tests is found to be positive.

References:

1. <http://sankalpindia.net/drupal/?q=health-benefits-donating-blood>
2. http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/607961/the_incredible_health_benefits_of_donating.html?cat=52