

Plasmapheresis Donation

<https://mbc.org/donate-blood/about-blood/right-type-your-type/plasmapheresis-donation/>

By making a specialty donation of plasma using an automated apheresis (AY-fur-EE-sis) process, you can give more of the proteins and nutrients found in this valuable blood component to cardiac surgery patients, burn victims, and others with various types of bleeding or clotting disorders. Plasma can also be used to make special medications to help patients with weakened immune systems resist infection and disease.

- Only male donors are eligible (see below)
- Types most needed: **A+, B+, AB+, AB-**
- Type AB donors are universal plasma donors, and are in high demand. Their plasma can be given to anyone in need
- Plasma donors can donate every 28 days. Two days later, they are eligible donate whole blood. Donors must wait 56 days to donate again after giving whole blood
- Approximate donation time: 75 minutes
- Plasma donations can be made at our Duluth, Eden Prairie, Plymouth, and St. Paul donor center [locations](#)

Plasmapheresis FAQ

- [Why donate plasma?](#)

As one of the three essential components of whole blood—along with red blood cells and platelets—plasma acts as a carrier for blood cells, nutrients, enzymes, and hormones. Clotting factors found in plasma can be critical to recovery and survival for newborn babies and adults going into open heart surgery. A typical liver transplant patient can require 25 units of plasma, while 20 units or more may be needed to sustain the life of a severe burn victim. Across the U.S., more than 3 million units of plasma are needed for transfusion every year. And since there is no substitute, only volunteer donors can help save lives.

- **What is plasmapheresis donation?**

Apheresis (AY-fur-EE-sis)—meaning to separate—allows you to give just one part of your blood and in greater quantities than through traditional methods. During a whole blood donation, for example, blood is drawn from your arm and collected as one unit. Only later is it separated into its three components: plasma, red blood cells, and platelets. When making a plasmapheresis donation, on the other hand, a special automated process is used: blood flows directly into a sterile single-use kit where plasma is separated while the other blood components—red blood cells and platelets—are returned to you, along with other fluids. Unlike in whole blood donations, donors experience no fluid loss during this process.

- **How long does the process take?**

A plasmapheresis donation appointment typically takes less than 90 minutes, with actual collection time of approximately 45 minutes.

- **How often can I donate?**

You can make a plasmapheresis donation every 28 days. Two days later, you also can return to donate whole blood or platelets. After giving whole blood, you must wait 56 days to donate again.

- **Who can donate plasma?**

Type AB blood is the universal donor for plasma, and therefore male donors with type AB are encouraged to donate plasma. Male donors with type A+ blood may also be good candidates to donate plasma. Results from the standard mini-physical and confidential interview will also be used to determine eligibility.

- **Why does Memorial Blood Centers elect to receive plasma only from males?**

In 2013, Memorial Blood Centers switched to an all-male collection strategy for plasma in an effort to eliminate nearly all risk of TRALI (Transfusion-Related Acute Lung Injury)—a rare but serious complication—to plasma recipients.

Antibodies thought to cause TRALI reside in plasma. They develop when an individual is exposed to cells from another person, e.g., during pregnancy or transfusion. This means that more women than men carry these white cell antibodies. Plasma transfusions that contain these

antibodies may lead to complications, including severe breathing problems and sometimes death.

Women who were previously plasma donors prior to 2013 are encouraged to be tested to determine their eligibility to donate platelets—another specialty blood component needed for treatment of hospital patients—or to consider a double red cell donation or whole blood donation.

To learn more about the blood components Memorial Blood Centers collects, please visit our [About Blood](#) page.

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- **[Do I receive payment for my donation?](#)**

No. All donations made through Memorial Blood Centers are voluntary. In fact, blood that is collected from people who have been paid cannot be used for transfusion.

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- **Learn more**
 - Contact us at 1-888-GIVE-BLD for additional information.
 - **[Plasmapheresis Donations Brochure](#)**