



## It's in you to give....The gift of life

Summer is a busy time for many Canadians. This period of increased outdoor activity and vacation travel also marks a busy and challenging time for Canadian Blood Services (CBS).

In addition to having enough blood to meet its regular requests for blood products used in routine surgeries and treatments, the CBS must also be able to respond to additional needs due to accidents and injuries that increase during the summer months.

One in every two Canadians will either need blood at some point or knows someone who will. The CBS conducts extensive screening of all blood donations to ensure product safety and, prior to donating, donors complete health questionnaires to ensure they are eligible to donate. Healthy adults between the ages of 17 and 71 years of age can donate blood approximately every two months.

The CBS says every minute of everyday someone in Canada needs blood, usually because of accidents, surgeries, cancer treatments, burn therapy, hemophilia and other types of blood diseases.

In addition to whole blood, some patients need donated plasma, the protein-rich liquid part of whole blood that helps blood components circulate through the body and support the immune system to fight liver diseases, cancer and in bone marrow therapy. Blood platelets are needed to make blood clot to prevent bleeding. All blood products are refrigerated and platelets are fragile, with a short shelf life of only five days. The shelf life of other blood products is 10 years for source plasma, one year for fresh frozen plasma, 42 days for red blood cells and 35 days for whole blood. Thus, regular donations are always in demand.

Another blood product is stem cells, which are the immature cells present in the bloodstream. Patients needing stem cells suffer with diseases including leukemia, lymphomas, myeloma and other metabolic

diseases and the CBS operates the OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Network to find matches between unrelated donors in Canada and worldwide. If you are between the ages of 17 and 50 years and in good health, you may join OneMatch.

The CBS says one blood donation can take less than one hour of your time and may bring the gift of life to three recipients. Patients are in need of all types of blood - A, AB, B and O. If you don't know your blood type, ask your doctor. See the CBS chart of blood types and Patient/Donor compatibilities:

Blood Type (Donor)	% of Blood Type Amongst all Canadians	Patient Types Compatible with the Red Blood Cells of Donor	Patient Types Compatible with the Plasma of Donor (Rh not indicated)
A+	36	A+, AB+	A, O
A-	6	A-, A+, AB-, AB+	A, O
O+	39	O+, A+, B+, AB+	O
O-	7	All Blood Types	O
B+	7.6	B+, AB+	B, O
B-	1.4	B-, B+, AB-, AB+	B, O
AB+	2.5	AB+	All Blood Types
AB-	0.5	AB-, AB+	All Blood Types

Donors are the heart of the Canadian Blood Services' blood supply system and a lifeline for Canadians of all ages. Canada's blood system is founded on the principle of volunteering. Just as recipients do not pay for the blood products they receive, donors are not paid for the blood or plasma they give.

During the summer, or at any time of the year, watch for blood clinics advertised in your local paper, visit the CBS' website [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca), or to find a blood donor clinic near you, call 1 888 2 DONATE (1-888-236-6283).

Taking the time out of your busy schedule to give the gift of life is the most precious donation you will ever make. Won't you take a little time to save a life?

It's in you to give.