

# New Year's Resolution: Donate a Blood Transfusion!

*Tips for a successful blood donation*

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## January is National Blood Donor Month.

Every 12 seconds in the United States, someone needs some sort of blood transfusion. Unfortunately, during the winter months blood banks see a drastic drop in blood donations. Below are helpful tips for a successful blood donation.

### Before

- In the days and weeks prior to donating, eat healthy, iron-rich foods. This will help maintain your iron level.
- Don't skip a meal the day of donating blood
- Get a good night's sleep
- Try to avoid caffeine

### During

- Wear a shirt with sleeves that can be raised above the elbow.
- Show the staff any good veins that have been used in the past to draw blood.
- Let the phlebotomist know if you have a preferred arm.
- Relax - You may feel nervous if donating for the first time. Listen to music, talk to other donors or read during the donation process.

### After

- Have a snack and a drink immediately after donating blood.
- If you feel light headed, lie down until the feeling passes.
- Consume plenty of non-alcoholic fluids before and after the donation to replenish any you may have lost.
- If you have any bleeding, apply firm pressure to the site and raise your arm for 5-10 minutes.
- Avoid strenuous physical activity or heavy lifting for about five hours after donation.
- If for any reason something doesn't feel right, you can call the toll-free number provided to you after your donation.



To learn more visit [www.redcrossblood.org/donating-blood](http://www.redcrossblood.org/donating-blood).

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