

UCLA

Health

Platelet Donor (Apheresis)



What is apheresis?

Apheresis is the process of separating blood into its different parts: platelets, red blood cells and plasma. Apheresis donations allow us to collect the parts of the blood that people need, and return the rest of the blood to the donor.



Platelets are needed for blood clotting.

Platelets are needed to help patients who have cancer therapy, bleeding disorders, open-heart surgery or organ transplantation. Platelets have a very short shelf-life and must be given within 5 days after collection. This requires constant replenishment of the hospital supply. Donors can donate platelets once every 7 days, up to 24 times in a 12-month period.

Red blood cells carry oxygen to all parts of the body.

Red blood cells are most needed after significant blood loss due to trauma or surgery or to treat low red blood cell counts. A single red blood cell donation (also called a whole blood donation) can be made once every 56 days; a donation of 2 units of red blood cells during one donation can be done once every 112 days. A donation of 2 units of red blood cells requires higher blood protein hemoglobin levels. Type O blood is in high demand because these red blood cells can be given to people with any blood type.

Plasma is the liquid part of the blood that also helps the blood to clot.

Plasma is used to treat patients with clotting problems, such as people with liver failure or bleeding disorders. Plasma donations can be made once every 4 weeks. Type AB blood is also in high demand because it can be used for plasma donations that can treat all patients.

How will my blood donation help UCLA Health patients?

A cancer patient can need on average:

- 2 units of platelets per week

A car accident victim can need up to:

- 50 units of red blood cells
- 5 units of platelets
- 50 units of plasma

A person who has liver transplant surgery needs, on average:

- 25 units of red blood cells
- 5 units of platelets
- 40 units of plasma

A person who has a stem cell transplant procedure needs, on average:

- 10 units of red blood cells
- 10 units of platelets, with many more needed after they leave the hospital

A heart surgery patient needs, on average:

- 7 units of red blood cells
- 2 units of platelets
- 4 units of plasma

What are the benefits of apheresis versus a whole blood donation?

Apheresis donors can help more patients by donating more units during each donation.

- Only the needed blood parts are collected for our patients; the other parts are returned to the donor.

Apheresis donors are extraordinary people, and their donations are an essential part of treatment for people with cancer and other life-threatening conditions.

By becoming an apheresis donor, you can make a huge difference for critically ill patients.

Do something extraordinary and donate today!



Paying it forward

At 4 years old, Tonilea Guimond seemed to be coming down with the flu. Concerned about her blood work, her pediatrician immediately sent Tonilea to UCLA Health, where she was diagnosed with leukemia. Since then, Tonilea has spent countless weeks in the hospital while undergoing chemotherapy and receiving numerous blood and platelet transfusions. “These blood products have allowed her to thrive,” says her mother, LeAnne. Knowing what a difference blood donations can make, LeAnne is now regularly donating blood and has signed up to be a bone marrow donor. She urges others to do the same and give the gift of life.

“The support of our friends and community for our family has been astounding. We also want to thank all the unknown heroes who have given the blood and platelets Tonilea has needed.”

-Leanne Guimond, mother

Making an apheresis donation is safe and easy.

Donor safety is our top priority — these blood collections are very safe.

During the donation, blood will be drawn from one arm using a sterile needle and channeled through new tubing into an apheresis machine. The machine will spin the blood to separate its different parts, collect the most needed parts and safely return the remaining blood to the donor through the same sterile needle used for collection.

To make sure that only a safe amount of blood is taken, we will ask you many questions, including questions about your weight and how often you donate blood.

To ensure that you enjoy the best experience possible during the blood collection, we provide streaming entertainment on Smart TVs attached to each comfortable donor chair. You can also access Wi-Fi on your own personal electronic devices.

Who can make an apheresis donation?

Donors must meet all required platelet donation standards.

For a list of requirements to donate, please visit uclahealth.org/programs/gotblood/donate-blood/eligibility

or scan the QR Code:



Platelet donors must also:

- Have a vein that can be accessed in at least one arm.
- Have not taken aspirin or aspirin-containing medicines 3 days before the donation.
- Have a blood test to check for HLA antibodies if the donor has ever been pregnant. HLA antibodies are not harmful to you as the donor. However, HLA antibodies can cause harm to the person receiving the blood product. Donors positive for antibodies may only donate whole blood.
- Allow about 2.5 to 3 hours for the entire donation process.

To make an appointment to donate, please call 310-825-0888, Option 2.

Our Westwood Village center is located at 1045 Gayley Ave., two blocks north of Wilshire Boulevard between Kinross and Weyburn avenues.

We also have a location on the UCLA campus in the Ackerman Union.

We provide parking near our donor centers.

We do not validate parking for any of the public lots.

When you call for an appointment, please discuss the parking options or visit our website for details.

Westwood Village:

1045 Gayley Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024

UCLA Campus

Ackerman Union, 380 Westwood Plaza, A-level, Los Angeles, CA 90095

Phone: 310-825-0888, Option 2

Email: gotblood@mednet.ucla.edu

Website: uclahealth.org/gotblood

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