

UCLA Health

Autologous Blood Donor



How many lives
will **U** save?



What is autologous blood?

Autologous blood is blood you donate for yourself for your upcoming surgery.

How safe is autologous blood?

Autologous blood carries the lowest risk of transfusion complications because:

- There is no risk of hepatitis, HIV or other viral infections.
- There is no risk of forming new red-cell antibodies.

Autologous blood is not completely without risk:

- There is risk of bacterial contamination.
- There is an increased chance that you will require a transfusion during your surgery or procedure.

Is there a charge for an autologous blood donation?

There is no charge for an autologous donation, only for processing and storage of the autologous blood.

Insurance coverage varies for these expenses, so you may want to check with your carrier before you donate.

Should everyone donate autologous blood?

No. More than half of all autologous blood donations are never used. Autologous donation is most likely to be beneficial when there is at least a 50 percent chance that the surgery or procedure you are having will require a blood transfusion.

Donating autologous blood may cause anemia. You should discuss the chances of needing a transfusion with your doctor. If the chances of a blood transfusion are low, you may benefit more by not donating and avoiding the risk of developing anemia.

What if my doctor suggests I donate for myself?

Most people can donate autologous blood if their surgery is scheduled in advance and time permits. There are no age limits, but the person must be of adequate size to donate a unit of blood.

To qualify, you must:

- Have a hemoglobin level of 11 g/dL or greater at the time of each donation.
- Be in good general health — no fever, cold, flu, sore throat or any other infection.
- Not have any indwelling catheters.
- Have completed the full course of antibiotics (if recently on antibiotics) at least 48 hours prior to donation (unless for acne); you must be symptom free 48 hours prior to donation.
- Be screened more extensively on the day of donation to determine if it is safe for you to donate.

When should I begin my donations?

Your donation schedule is tailored to meet your specific needs. It will depend on the number of units requested and the time available before surgery. As soon as your surgery date is set, provide a phone number to discuss your donation schedule. Our staff will need to know when and where your surgery will take place. Donations are usually made one week apart, with your last donation **at least three days** before surgery. If the surgery date is postponed, you may need to donate additional units.

How do I arrange for my donations?

Discuss this option with your doctor. He or she will determine how many units of blood you will need for your surgery and whether you will be able to donate all of these yourself. Your doctor must send the UCLA Blood & Platelet Center an order for an autologous donation **BEFORE** your first appointment.

Before you schedule an appointment, you must have a hospital ID number. If you need to obtain an ID number, call the admissions department of the appropriate facility to have one issued:

**Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center
(Westwood): 310-267-8000, option 1**

**UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica and
Orthopaedic Hospital: 310-319-4115**

Next, call the UCLA Blood & Platelet Center at 310-825-0888 to schedule your donation. Our staff in the Special Donor office will coordinate your appointments and answer any questions.

**Find additional information at
uclahealth.org/gotblood**

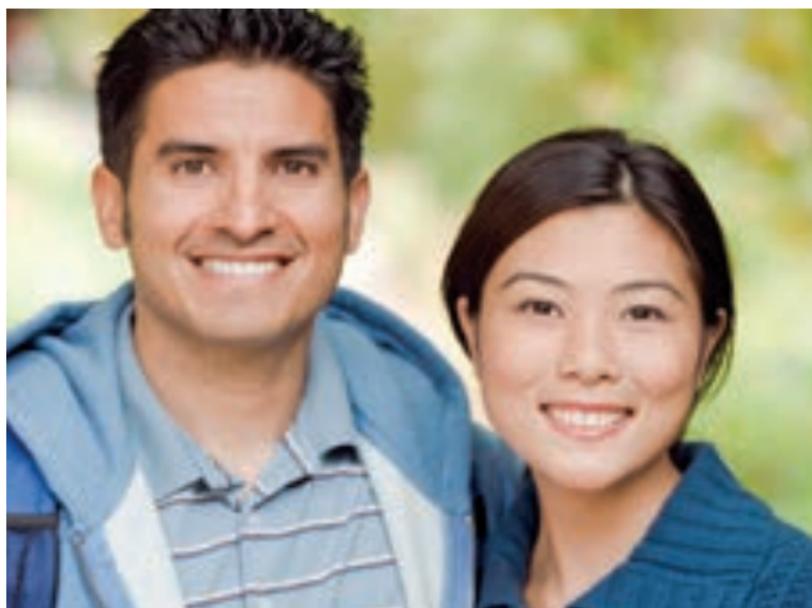
How should I prepare for a blood donation?

As soon as you know you will be donating:

- Check with your doctor to see if you need to take an iron supplement. If so, we suggest taking ferrous sulfate, 300 mg (available without a prescription), up to three times a day or as tolerated. Take with food. Vitamin C can increase iron absorption, so take the iron supplement with juices rich in Vitamin C (orange, grapefruit, tomato).
- The day before you donate, drink plenty of fluids.

On the day of donation:

- Bring ID (preferably a photo ID).
- Bring your hospital ID number.
- Bring a list of all your medications.
- Eat a low-fat meal and drink extra fluids.





Will the blood I donate meet all my needs?

The autologous units you donate are normally stored as whole blood. If your doctor indicates a need for frozen plasma, we can separate your whole blood into red blood cells and frozen plasma. Some surgeries may require other components that cannot be prepared from your autologous donation. Discuss this with your doctor.

There may not be enough time for you to donate all the blood you need. If this is the case, we can provide any additional blood you may require from our volunteer blood supply, or you may choose your own “directed donors.” Please know that although you may feel that directed donations are safer, there is no scientific evidence that this is correct. The staff in the Special Donor office can answer any questions you have about directed donors and will provide you with a *Directed Blood Donor* brochure upon request.

Some patients need additional blood during surgery beyond what their doctor has requested. If this occurs, you will receive blood donated by volunteers who have been carefully screened and tested in accordance with all regulatory requirements.

What if I don't use all my autologous blood?

Your autologous blood will be held for you until it expires, then it will be discarded. It cannot be used for anyone else.

Will my blood be tested?

Every unit of blood (including autologous) will be tested for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis, syphilis and other infectious diseases that may be transmitted by blood. If a unit tests positive for any infectious disease, both you and your physician will be notified, and it will be up to the discretion of your physician whether your blood will be used for transfusion. Occasionally, technical problems arise that make it impossible to test your blood.

The UCLA Blood & Platelet Center maintains a deferral registry of donors (including autologous), who are ineligible to donate blood because of positive test results or disqualifying donor histories. Donor test results are confidential and will not be released to anyone other than the ordering physician without your written consent. However, confirmed positive test results for certain communicable diseases will be reported to state and local public health agencies as mandated by law.

How long will my donation take?

Allow a total of two hours for your first donation. If we need to speak with your doctor, it may take longer. Subsequent donations should take less time.

It is important that you call to schedule donation appointments in advance. There is typically a waiting period between each step in the donation process.

- You will be asked to complete paperwork and answer written and verbal questions. In some cases, we may need to speak to your doctor to get more detailed information about your medical history.
- Your temperature, pulse and blood pressure will be taken.
- We will prick your finger to perform a hemoglobin test for anemia.
- Your arm will be cleaned with an antiseptic.
- The blood takes about 10 to 15 minutes to collect.
- After you donate, we will bandage your arm.
- You will need to rest for at least 15 minutes after donating. Juice and cookies will be served.

Can donations be made elsewhere?

Autologous donations can be made at other donor centers and shipped to UCLA. The processing and transport of these “outside” units may take up to one week, and there may be shipping and handling fees. You and your physician will need to make advance arrangements with the facility where the blood will be collected. Billing policies vary with each outside center. UCLA will not pay for blood to be shipped from another collection center.

What if I donate autologous blood at UCLA and my surgery is not performed at a UCLA hospital?

If you have already donated your autologous units, immediately notify the UCLA Blood Bank at 310-267-8150. If it is possible, we will ship your units to any requested facility within California. Transporting blood to other hospitals requires extra time. UCLA will not pay to have your units shipped to a non-UCLA facility.



Terms you may not know:

Directed donor

Want to donate for a friend, relative or specific patient? Be a directed donor.

Replacement donor

Want to help replace units that were used by patients and help keep our blood supply at a safe level? Be a replacement donor.

56 days, or every eight weeks

Donate every 56 days, which is the amount of time you need to wait between donating whole blood. You can donate platelets more frequently.

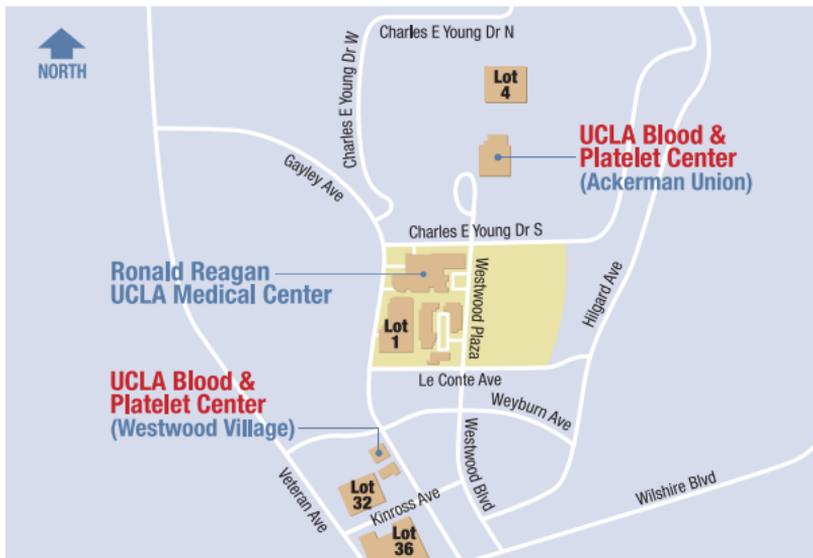
Platelet donor

Want to help the most you can with one donation? Be a platelet donor. Platelets play a vital role in the clotting process. Due to their illness or treatment, some patients have a hard time producing healthy platelets.

Blood drives

Want to have a blood drive for your business, school, place of worship or other organization? Call us at 310-794-7207.

Be a hero. Make a blood donation.



Locations and parking

Our Westwood Village center is located at 1045 Gayley Avenue, two blocks north of Wilshire Blvd. between Kinross and Weyburn Avenues. We have several parking options available:

- **Lot 1 (at UCLA Medical Plaza)**
- **Lot 32 (one block north of Wilshire Blvd.)**

We also have a location on the UCLA campus in Ackerman Union with parking available in Lot 4 (on Westwood Plaza). 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.



Blood & Platelet Center

WESTWOOD VILLAGE:

1045 Gayley Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024

UCLA CAMPUS:

Ackerman Student Union, A-level

310-825-0888

E-mail: gotblood@mednet.ucla.edu

uclahealth.org/gotblood