

BECAUSE WE CARE

A GUIDE TO BLOOD DONATION FOR YOUNG AND FIRST-TIME DONORS

This guide is written for school nursing personnel, administrators and faculty to communicate the ways in which ImpactLife reduces the possibility of adverse reactions to donation and to minimize the effects of such reactions when they occur.

ImpactLife strives to create a safe and comfortable experience for every blood donor. This is especially important for our young and first-time donors, whose future donations may depend on how they feel when giving blood for the first time. While most donors, even first-time donors, experience no adverse effects to blood donation, some donors do become dizzy, light-headed or faint when giving blood. **Medical kits can be provided at all drives. Talk with your drive coordinator prior to the day of the drive to ensure the availability of one.**

WHAT IS A REACTION?

While infrequent, adverse reactions to blood donation may occur at any point in the donation process. Individuals experiencing a reaction may feel dizzy, light-headed, nauseous or faint. Reactions occur in less than one-percent of all donations, but in nearly five percent of donations by young, lower weight and first-time donors. High school donors can take steps to reduce the possibility of experiencing a reaction. To help students prepare to give blood, we will provide educational tools on preventing reactions prior to your school's blood drive. (Listed right)

Reactions may be categorized as mild, moderate or severe.

Mild
Most Common

Anxiety, cool, clammy skin, lightheadedness, dizziness, mild diaphoresis, nausea, chills, pallor, bradycardia, mild hypotension.

Moderate

In addition to the above, donor may vomit or experience rapid, shallow respiration, brief loss of consciousness or hypotension.

Severe
Least Common

Longer or more prolonged loss of consciousness, generalized shaking, clenched teeth, urinary incontinence, involuntary muscular contractions or convulsions.

Reactions at venipuncture site

While mild vasovagal reactions are the most common type of adverse reaction to blood donation, donors may also experience pain, hematoma and/or bleeding at the venipuncture site (blood draw site). If a donor is experiencing pain, bruising or bleeding, please contact ImpactLife staff at the blood drive for follow-up. **If the blood drive has ended and staff are no longer present, please call 800-747-5401.**

FREQUENCY OF REACTIONS

Mild vasovagal reactions are the most common type of reaction. This type of reaction – anxiety, dizziness, syncope (fainting), hypotension – can be caused by nervousness, the sight of others giving blood, the finger stick prior to donation, by individual or group excitement, or for unknown reasons.

Donors experiencing a mild vasovagal reaction ordinarily respond well to reassurance, application of cold packs behind the neck and/or on the chest, and lying down with legs elevated.

BROCHURE FOR STUDENTS

THE CHECKLIST

- MINIMIZE Caffeine
- DRINK Water
- EAT TWICE
- 8 HOUR Rest
- CONSENT
- PRESENT PHOTO
- VERIFY INFO
- TAKE QUESTIONS
- MINI-PHYSICAL
- DONATE (ABOUT 15 MIN)
- SNACK TIME
- DRINK WATER
- RELAX (AT LEAST 10 MIN)
- BRAG ON SOCIAL
- TAKE IT EASY

THE DETAILS

Get as close to 8 hrs of sleep as you can and eat a hearty (eggs, meat, leafy greens, fruit) morning and morning meal and a salty snack. To help stabilize your blood pressure, drink lots of water or Gatorade (and minimize caffeine). Your body will lose about 2 cups of fluid during donation so being fully hydrated is important. Bring your photo ID (school ID, state issued ID, driver's license or yearbook photo accepted) to present at your donation. If you are 16 years old, remember to get your parental consent form signed.

Download consent form: BLOODCENTER.ORG/STUDENT

Here are the eligibility basics:

- 110 lbs (minimum weight)
- AGE: 16 (with parent/guardian consent)
- PHOTO ID

APPOINTMENT REMINDER

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

LOCATION: _____

QUESTIONS? Text DON8 to 999-777, email hello@impactlife.org or call 800-747-5401.

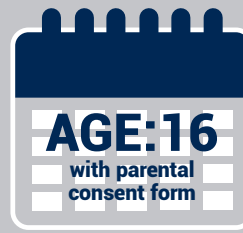
APPLIED MUSCLE TENSION TECHNIQUE

BREATHE ▶ FLEX ▶ RELAX ▶ REPEAT

- ▶ Start with some deep, relaxing breaths.
- ▶ Flex your chest & arms and count to five.
- ▶ Release the breath for 10 seconds and Relax.
- ▶ Repeat - this time flex your core muscles next time your legs & buttocks and then **START OVER!**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AT BLOODCENTER.ORG/STUDENT

BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS



REDUCING THE LIKELIHOOD OF A REACTION

Reactions occur in greater frequency among younger, lower weight and first-time donors. There are specific interventions that have been shown to reduce the likelihood of reaction. ImpactLife has developed educational tools to help donors reduce the risk of experiencing a reaction.

This education is provided in a brochure for high schools, "The Guide to Donating Blood" and at [BLOODCENTER.ORG/STUDENT](https://www.bloodcenter.org/student). We have also developed a 3-minute video for high school donors that covers the same material available at [BLOODCENTER.ORG/STUDENT](https://www.bloodcenter.org/student)

Also, as part of a wellness initiative, the blood center also encourages donors to consider taking iron supplements (18-38 mg of ferrous gluconate) daily for eight weeks post donation to help replace the iron lost in a whole blood donation. It is available over the counter and in multivitamins with iron (read the label). This amount has no more side effects than a sugar pill. For more information, visit [BLOODCENTER.ORG/IRON](https://www.bloodcenter.org/iron)

After giving blood, all donors are asked to spend 10-15 minutes in our refreshment area. This allows donors to immediately have a snack and a beverage to begin to replace fluids lost through the donation, while giving our staff time to make sure the donor is feeling well before being dismissed from the blood drive. Because some donors feel unstable or may fall during post-donation recovery, we ask our high school-age donors to sit on the floor to eliminate the risk of injury due to falls in the donor recovery area.

Donors who have spent 10-15 minutes in post-donation recovery and are feeling well are dismissed from the blood drive. We will continue to monitor students who may need additional time in the refreshment area, but will also ensure students are not allowed to linger in this area longer than necessary.

TREATING REACTIONS

Most reactions occur on the donor bed or in the canteen/recovery area. Impactlife personnel are trained and accustomed to recognizing and treating donor reactions and will provide care for donors experiencing a reaction at the blood drive. However, on some occasions, a donor will leave the blood drive and experience a delayed reaction to giving blood. If this happens:

- 1) If the donor is standing, carefully assist him or her in lying down on the floor. The greatest risk of injury in a donor reaction is in the possibility of fainting and striking an object or the floor in a fall.
- 2) Provide assurance and remain calm. Helping the donor ease any anxiety will help begin the process of ending the reaction.
- 3) If ImpactLife staff are still on site at the blood drive, contact our staff to let them know a donor is not feeling well and a representative will come to your location to assess the donor and provide care by:
 - a. Placing the donor in the Tredelenburg position (lying down, back on the floor, with legs elevated above the head);
 - b. Placing ice packs behind the neck and on the chest of the donor;
 - c. Providing assurance to the donor;
 - d. Checking vital signs;
 - e. Having the donor drink fluids as soon as possible.
- 4) If the blood drive has ended and staff are no longer on site, call 800-747-5401 to reach ImpactLife staff.
- 5) In rare instances, emergency medical services may be called to care for a donor experiencing a reaction. Impactlife staff will always care for the donor first before notifying the chairperson, school nurse or principal of such an event.

FOLLOW US!

[@impactlifeblood](https://www.instagram.com/impactlifeblood)



FOR MORE INFORMATION: [BLOODCENTER.ORG/STUDENT](https://www.bloodcenter.org/student)

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