

# National Blood Donor Month

## Takes Place Each January

### Did you know?

- Very few people [donate blood](#) on an annual basis. According to the [American Red Cross](#), only 3% of the eligible U.S. population donates blood to help the 5 million in need.
- Every two seconds someone in the United States needs blood.
- Every blood donation can help save up to three lives.
- Currently, there is an urgent need for blood donations. Winter months make it difficult to collect the necessary amount of blood and platelets needed to supply hospitals. The dangerously low blood supply levels have forced some hospitals to defer patients from major surgery, including organ transplants.



### Faith communities can make a big impact by:

- **Hosting** an onsite or virtual blood drive. [Learn how.](#)
- **Carpooling**: If there are people in your congregation who want to donate blood but do not have transportation, organize a carpool to the local blood center.
- **Volunteering**: Congregants who can't donate blood due to medical or other issues can still volunteer at blood centers and blood drives.
- **Announcing** the need: Many people may not be aware that there is a great need for blood donations in the winter months. You can announce this need in bulletins, newsletters, and group meetings. [Download social media images and draft editorials and letters to the editor.](#)

**Source:** [What you need to know about giving blood](#)

**To help curb the national shortage, learn more about donating blood: [Illinois](#) | [Wisconsin](#)**

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## Common misconceptions about donating blood include:

- You can't give blood if you have tattoos or piercings, have any health or medical issues, or if you have traveled internationally
- It will hurt or it takes a long time to give
- You can't donate if you are on a medication
- You can only donate once a year



## A few tips to keep in mind when giving blood:

### Before your appointment:

- Eat vegetables and protein 1 week prior
- Make sure to have a good meal beforehand
- Keep well hydrated

### After your blood appointment:

- Take it easy the rest of the day (avoid rigorous activity)
- Check your online account in a couple days to see which location your blood went to help at least one patient in need.
- Schedule your next blood [appointment online](#) in 8 weeks

**Source:** [What you need to know about giving blood](#)