

You can save a life **BY DONATING BLOOD**

Thousands of patients would die daily if there were insufficient quantities of blood in stock. When one donates blood, they give patients the gift that money cannot buy or science cannot create. A unit of blood can save up to three lives.



Who needs blood?



Women haemorrhaging due to pregnancy complication and other gynaecological complications.



Children with severe anaemia.



Surgical and cancer patients.



Premature babies.



Accident and trauma patients.

What happens to your blood donation?

1. A unit of blood is drawn from a volunteer donor.
2. Blood is collected into a sterile bag and labelled.
3. Units are transported to the nearest South African National Blood Service (SANBS) testing and processing laboratories. In the processing laboratory, blood is spun down in a centrifuge and then separated into different components:



Plasma – contains proteins and clotting factors used to treat patients with massive bleeding or clotting factor deficiencies.



Red Blood Cells – contain haemoglobin, a protein that carries oxygen throughout the body. Used to treat patients with anaemia or blood loss due to trauma or surgery.



Platelets – crucial in helping blood clots. Patients with low platelet levels often suffer from bruising and bleeding.

4. Blood is tested to ensure that it is safe for transfusion.
5. Local hospitals place orders with SANBS for blood products based on their needs.
6. Blood products are stored prior to transfusion. The shelf-life of blood is limited. Platelets expire in 5 days. Red blood cells expire in 42 days. Plasma has a 1-year shelf life from the day of collection.
7. Blood is transfused to patients in need.

#YourBloodSavesLives

#BloodDonorMonth