

## Six out 10 Canadians will need blood during their life

Every 20 seconds, someone in Canada needs blood.

Which is why donating is so important, said Sandra Tesolin spokesperson for the Toronto Blood Centre.

"Blood is vital to the health care system."

So vital that each day, 700 Ontario donors are needed to supply the 61 area hospitals with enough blood.

**Donate every 56 days**

People 17 to 70-years-old can safely donate every 56 days.

Less than half a litre is taken out during

this procedure (one 10th of the body's supply) and is replaced within a few weeks.

It takes just one hour of a donor's time (six hours a year) and can save up to four people, said Tesolin.

**Variety of uses**

The red cells are used for people who have been in an accident, the platelets are used for cancer patients and the plasma is used for people who have been burnt.

While receiving blood is not 100 per cent safe (no medical procedure is), many safe-

guards are in place to make it as safe as possible for both the donor and the recipient, said Tesolin.

Public education and recruiting eligible donors through a form are two of the safeguards, she said.

Donors must fill out a form that asks a variety of health questions.

In a private booth, a nurse verifies the answers by reading the questions and having the donor re-answer them.

The nurse also asks additional questions.

Then the nurse leaves and the donor can check a box telling the Blood Centre whether they should use their blood.

The blood then gets tested.

"Testing is important, but it's not the only safeguard."

**Donating safe for donors.**

"Donors can not get any disease from

donating blood. (All the equipment) is new, sterile ... and gets discarded (afterwards)."

And since six out of 10 Canadians will require either blood or a blood product at some point in their life, donating is even more important, said Tesolin.

"People are giving blood ... to their community and to any one of us who needs blood."

**For details: 416-974-9900 or 1-800-701-7803**

**The following are examples of requested blood products (in one week).**

Collected units: 3,059  
Units issued to hospitals: 3,116  
Units transferred in: 373  
• A trauma patient needed 54 units of red blood cells and 30 units of platelets, O positive, 34 units of plasma and 32 units of cryoprecipitate, group O and 10 units of red blood cells and 10 units of platelets, B positive

• a cancer patient needed four units of red blood cells, A negative

• A woman with post-partum bleeding was given 10 units of red blood cells and 10 units of platelets, A positive

• A patient with complications during open heart surgery needed 10 units of red blood cells, A positive

• 12 patients with gastrointestinal bleeding were given a total of 30 units of red blood cells, O positive, 14 units of red blood cells, A positive, 12 units of red blood cells, B positive, four units of red blood cells, A negative, four units of red blood cells, O negative and 10 units of plasma and 27 units of cryoprecipitate

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