

UCLA

Health

Autologous Blood Donor



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 complications because:

- There is no risk of hepatitis, HIV or other viral infections.
- There is no risk of forming new antibodies. This is important because antibodies can lead to serious illness when you receive blood.

Receiving autologous blood is not completely without risk:

- There is a low risk of bacteria growing in the blood. This happens in about 6 of every 100 units of blood given.
- There is an increased chance that you will need to receive blood during or after your surgery or procedure.

Should everyone donate autologous blood?

No. More than half of these blood donations are never used. Autologous donation is most likely to be helpful when 1 out of every 2 people or more who have the surgery or procedure you are having need to receive blood.

Donating autologous blood may cause you to have low levels of healthy red blood cells. You should discuss the chances of needing to receive blood with your doctor. If the chances are low, you may benefit more by not donating.

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 also other factors that may affect your ability to donate.

To qualify, you must:

- Have a blood protein hemoglobin level of 11 grams per deciliter or higher at the time of donation.
- Be in good general health, with no fever, cold, flu, sore throat or other symptoms of infection in the past 3 days.
- Not have any open cuts or wounds.
- Not have any indwelling catheters.
- Complete any course of antibiotics you are taking at least 3 days before donation (unless you are taking antibiotics for acne).
- Be screened on the day of donation to see if it is safe for you to donate.

When should I begin my donations?

It will depend on the number of units needed. As soon as your surgery date is set, please contact us.

How do I arrange for my donations?

First, talk to your doctor about how many units of blood you will need for your surgery and whether you will be able to donate for yourself. Your doctor must provide a completed “Autologous/Directed Donation Request” form to the UCLA Health Blood & Platelet Center before your first appointment.

Next, call the UCLA Health Blood & Platelet Center at 310-794-7207 to schedule your donation. Our staff will set up your appointments and answer any questions.

How should I prepare for a blood donation?

- Eat healthy foods.
- Drink at least 8 to 10 glasses of water a day for 2 to 3 days before your donation.
- Avoid fatty foods.

On the day of donation:

- Bring a photo ID.
- Bring a list of all of your medications.
- Eat a low-fat meal and drink extra fluids.

Will the blood I donate meet all of my needs?

There may not be enough time for you to donate all the blood you need. If this is the case, we can provide any extra blood you need from our volunteer blood supply. If this happens, you will receive blood donated by volunteers who have been carefully screened and tested and meet state and federal requirements. You can also ask a friend or relative to donate blood specifically for you. Blood from these donors is called directed donor blood. This blood will be reserved for you if it is compatible. If the directed donor’s blood is not compatible, and therefore not safe for you, the blood will be made available for another patient. In this way, directed donor blood also helps ensure that there is enough blood for all patients who need it.

What if I don't use all of 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) is tested for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis, syphilis and other infectious diseases. If a unit tests positive for any infectious disease, both you and your doctor will be notified, and your doctor will decide whether your blood will be used. Occasionally, there may be technical problems that make it impossible to test your blood.

Donor test results are confidential and will not be released to anyone except your doctor without your written consent. However, confirmed positive test results for certain diseases will be reported to state and local public health agencies as required by law.

How long will my donation take?

Please allow 2 hours for your visit. If we need to speak with your doctor, it may take longer.

It is important that you call to schedule your donation appointment.

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

Location and parking

Our Westwood Village center is located at 1045 Gayley Ave., two blocks north of Wilshire Boulevard between Kinross and Weyburn avenues.

We provide parking near our center.

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 Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024

Phone: [310-794-7207](tel:310-794-7207)

Email: gotblood@mednet.ucla.edu

Website: uclahealth.org/gotblood



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