

Coordinator e-News

Iron Levels & Blood Donations

All blood donors have their iron tested before each blood donation. Low iron is the #1 reason for being deferred from donating blood, and many donors ask us how they can increase low iron levels.



Iron levels can fluctuate daily. At the Community Blood Center, we determine iron levels with a hematocrit test, which measures the percentage of red blood cells found in your blood.

Normal hematocrit levels range from 36% to 50%. People need a hematocrit level of at least 38% to donate blood. Those who are deferred for low iron aren't necessarily anemic, it just means they don't have enough iron to share.

Different types of foods contain different forms of iron. *Heme* iron is found

in animal foods, and *nonheme* iron is found in plant foods. It is easier for the body to absorb *heme* iron than *nonheme* iron.

Good sources of *heme* iron include roasted beef tenderloin, lean chuck beef, oysters, clams, and chicken liver. *Nonheme* iron can be found in soybeans, kidney beans, lima and navy beans, lentils, and molasses. In addition to foods which naturally contain iron, many foods such as breakfast cereals and instant oatmeal are fortified with iron.

The FDA has set the "Daily Value" for iron at 18 mg. By looking at the nutritional labels on food packaging, you can determine which foods are good sources of iron.

For more information on iron, visit the website for the National Institute of Health at <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/iron.asp>.

Donor Eligibility Changes

Donation eligibility criteria for autoimmune diseases and cardiac patients has recently changed. In the past few years, other changes have made it easier for cancer survivors, people with diabetes, and those with tattoos to give blood.

This means that people who have been previously deferred from giving blood may now be able to donate. If your donors have any questions about their eligibility to donate blood, please encourage them to call us at (920)738-3131 or (800)280-4102.

All donor eligibility questions are treated confidentially.

★ ★ ★ ★ February Coordinator of the Month

Sandy Schneider, new coordinator for Trinity Lutheran Church in Merrill, had a fantastic first drive!

Sandy recruited her family, friends, and church members to come out for the Sunday morning blood drive.

There was a total of 49 donors, and 21 were new donors with the Northwoods Community Blood Center!!

Great job, Sandy! Thank you for the time and effort you put into making this blood drive successful. You've set the bar high- for your next drive on July 12th you have a record to break!



Ideas for Spicing Up Your Blood Drives

- Make the most of the buddy system— ask your veteran blood donors to bring a new donor with them to each blood drive.



- Incorporate a theme into your blood drives. Follow a seasonal concept (Mardi Gras, 4th of July, Halloween, Superbowl) or ask your Recruiter how you can check out our "Theme Drive" kits.

- Add each blood drive to your organizational or community calendar.

- Give out treats, and tell people in advance what you'll be giving out!

- Invite your Recruiter to speak about blood donation at a meeting, event or assembly.

- Create a challenge! Encourage various groups to recruit the greatest number of donors. This can be done between departments, grade levels, businesses, or teams that you create yourself... the possibilities are endless!

- Place your blood drive posters in highly visible areas.
- Personally ask people to give blood.
- At each blood drive, prominently post a sign-up sheet for the next blood drive in the snack area, so you have a ready-made "hot prospect" list to contact for your next drive.
- Do you know someone who has received blood— or who is passionate about donating? Ask them to write an article for an upcoming newsletter, sharing their story and asking people to donate.
- Have a sign-up table at an event or gathering, and ask passerby to give blood
- Contact people on the CBC list of past donors and ask them to donate.

