



Please Note: This is a guide to give an overview of the health requirements most frequently asked by potential whole blood donors. These guidelines are not comprehensive and are as current as possible, but be aware that certain revisions may be made that are not listed here. The BCNJ's main concerns are the safety of the donor and the safety of the recipient of the blood. New medical information and requirements are implemented immediately. For more detailed questions or concerns, please call the donor services department at 800-652-5663, ext. 132 or 198.

Volunteer blood donors must bring a signed or photo form of identification.

Donors must be at least 17 years of age, **weigh at least 120 pounds** and be in general good health. There is no upper age limit for donors as long as they are in good health with no medical problems. Donors are encouraged to eat meals at usual times and drink plenty of fluids, preferably non-caffeinated, prior to donation. Long periods without eating may cause a reaction. Individuals may make whole blood donations every 56 days (eight weeks) as long as they meet all health requirements.

AIDS

Donors **MUST NOT** donate blood if they are HIV positive or are at risk of getting and spreading the AIDS Virus. Donors will be asked to carefully review a list of risk factors with a health professional when they come to donate.

Cancer

Basal or squamous cell skin cancer, in-situ cervical cancer, benign polyps/lumps all acceptable if excised and healed. Other cancers, please check with the blood center as the deferral time for different cancers vary.

Colds/Flu

Symptom free for seventy two hours after sore throat, productive cough, and/or fever. Acceptable: mild nasal stuffiness, dry cough, and allergies. Donor needs to state symptoms are due to allergies. No deferral for flu shot.

Dental Work

Twenty four (24) hour deferral for cleaning/fillings/x-rays; seventy two (72) hour deferral after completion of tooth extraction, root canal procedures and oral surgery once sutures are removed.

Diabetes

Acceptable if controlled by diet, oral medication and/or insulin if dosage is controlled and donor stable.

Ear/Body Piercing; Acupuncture

Acceptable if performed with single use equipment.

Heart Conditions

Dependent on individual evaluation. High blood pressure controlled by medication and without heart problems is acceptable. Heart medications other than for high blood pressure are generally not acceptable. A history of heart bypass, angioplasty, or valve replacement will be accepted if at least 6 months have passed, the donor is asymptomatic, and on no heart medications.

Medications

Antibiotics: Deferral for 24 hours after course is completed and infection-free. Antibiotics taken prophylactically for acne or dental work are acceptable.

Accutane, Proscar, Propecia, Amnestein, Claravis, Sotret: Deferral for at least one month from the last dose.

Tegison (for psoriasis): permanent deferral.

Avodart: Deferral for six months.

Aspirin: acceptable for whole blood donors. Apheresis donors should not take aspirin or aspirin-containing medications up to 48 hours before a donation. Tylenol is acceptable.

Birth Control Pills: acceptable.

Pregnancy

Deferral for women who are pregnant; acceptable six weeks after delivery (even if breast feeding).

Surgery

Must be released by physician following major surgery. Deferral for 12 months if blood or blood products have been received. Uncomplicated hernia, hemorrhoid, vein ligation, appendix, tonsil operations and most laparoscopy procedures are not considered major surgery. Minor surgery is acceptable if sutures are removed, wound is healed, and patient is released by physician.

Tattoos

Acceptable if performed with single use ink, single use needle, and in a licensed NJ facility.

Travel/Foreign Country Residence

Wait 12 months to donate following foreign travel to areas considered at risk for malaria with or without preventative malarial medication. Recent immigrants from malarial countries must wait 3 years. A history of malaria is acceptable if there have been no symptoms for three years. For malarial areas, go to www.cdc.gov/travel/yb/index.htm.

Indefinite deferral for visits to, or residence in, the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Gibraltar, Scotland, Wales, Isle of Man, Channel Islands or Falkland Islands) for a cumulative total of 3 months from January 1, 1980 to December 31, 1996.

Indefinite deferral for cumulative visit of 5 years or more from 1980 to present in Europe.

If a member of US military, civilian military employee or a dependent of a member of the US military who spent time in Europe, please call BCNJ for eligibility guidelines.

Permanent deferral if born in or lived in (since 1977): Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Niger, or Nigeria.

If unsure, please call BCNJ for clarification on any of above guidelines.

