

WHAT HAPPENS TO A WHOLE BLOOD DONATION?

Transfusion Fact Sheet Volume 6, Number 6



Who is eligible to donate?

Upon arrival at the Blood Donor Centre, a donor is registered and assessed for eligibility to donate by questionnaire and then an interview. This process enables the Blood Service to ensure that a donation will be safe for the donor and the recipient.



What happens at the donation?

A whole blood donation is approximately 470 mL (an adult has between 5–7 litres of blood in their body). This donation is collected over 5–10 minutes and the first 30 mL is diverted to be drawn into sample tubes for testing. The appointment will take around one hour including registration and interview time, as well as rest and refreshment time after the donation is finished.



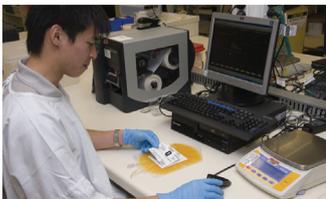
What does the Blood Service do with a whole blood donation?

Whole blood is centrifuged and separated into red cells, buffy coat (white cells and platelets) and plasma so recipients can receive the most appropriate treatment – it is very rare for a patient to need whole blood. All red cells and platelets are filtered to remove white cells. All platelets are screened for bacterial contamination.



What happens to the samples?

Mandatory testing for ABO and Rh (D) blood type, viral screening, red cell antibody screening and syphilis is performed in Blood Service laboratories. When required, additional donor testing is performed, including confirmatory testing, malarial antibody screening and CMV antibody screening.



What happens after the samples are tested?

Once donor selection criteria have been met, mandatory viral screening is non-reactive, blood grouping results have been confirmed, red cell antibody screening is complete and product quality is acceptable as per defined component specifications, components (red blood cells, plasma and platelets) are labelled for release and made available in stock inventory.



How is the blood donation delivered to hospital?

Component orders are packed into shippers according to pack type and component temperature requirements and transported to hospitals and laboratories using a consignment tracking system.