

16-year-olds and Blood Donation

FAQ



Andy donated blood in high school. When he was 20-years-old he needed blood after an emergency surgery.

Q: I heard that 16-year-olds can now donate blood. Is that true?

A: Yes. On September 1, 2008 BloodCenter of Wisconsin began accepting donations from 16-year-olds (with parental consent) that weigh at least 110 pounds and are in general good health. Donors must also meet the general criteria to donate. If your son or daughter is 16-years-old and has previously expressed interest in donating blood, but was not old enough, now could be their opportunity. By becoming a blood donor your son or daughter is showing great civic responsibility, maturity and a sense of community pride. Through their blood donation, your son or daughter has the potential to save up to three lives!

Q: Do other states allow 16-year-olds to donate blood?

A: Nearly 30 states (including Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota) have permitted blood donations from 16-year-old donors and many have been accepting those donors for years.

Q: Why does BloodCenter of Wisconsin require parental consent forms for 16-year-olds but not 17-year-olds?

A: According to Wisconsin state statute, parental consent is required for 16-year-olds, but not 17-year-olds. Some schools require parental consent forms for 17-year-old donors, but BloodCenter of Wisconsin is not required by law to collect parental consent forms from 17-year-olds.

BloodCenter of Wisconsin requires all 16-year-olds to have a parental consent form to donate at any donation site including high school blood drives, community blood drives, or any of our donor centers. 16-year-olds donating at high school blood drives should return the signed form as directed by the blood drive coordinator. A new form is required each time a 16-year-old donates.

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Q: Where can I obtain a parental consent form?

A: Parental consent forms will be available from BloodCenter staff at all blood drives and donor centers. High school blood drives will receive copies of consent forms from a BloodCenter of Wisconsin Donor Recruiter prior to the scheduled drive date. Parental consent forms for 16-year-olds can also be downloaded from our website at www.bcw.edu.

Q: What form of identification (ID) is needed to donate?

A: The following forms of ID will be accepted:

- 1.Driver's license
- 2.State-issued ID card
- 3.Student identification card
- 4.Passport, visa or green card

Q: How can donors prepare for their blood donation?

A: Donors should get a good night's sleep, limit caffeine intake, eat a good meal and drink plenty of fluids in preparation for their donation.

Q: How often can one give whole blood?

A: You can donate whole blood every 56 days or eight weeks, up to six times per year.

Q: Why should I give blood?

A: This is a volunteer opportunity like no other. BloodCenter of Wisconsin is the only provider of blood to the community hospitals where you live and work. Medical technology has provided many life-saving discoveries over the years, but there is still no substitute for blood. In a medical emergency, often the most important element is the availability of blood. Blood donations can help a variety of individuals: trauma victims, surgery patients, premature babies, and individuals with anemia, cancer patients and many more.

Q: What benefits are available for individuals who donate blood?

A: In addition to helping save up to three lives, blood donors receive many benefits, for example; all donors receive a mini-physical exam at the time of their donation. This includes the determination of hematacrit levels, blood pressure, temperature and various blood screening tests. After their first donation, donors will receive a donor identification card.



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