



## A Platelet Pheresis Donor is an Extraordinary Person

When donors are called to donate, they know someone is in critical need of a blood component that only the platelet donor is specially qualified to give.

These special blood-component donations save lives! If you already donate blood you know how it feels to be a lifesaver.

Donating platelets is another way to help.

Working to make sure the Gift of Life is always available for those in need!



Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital  
Blood Donor Room  
Clinical Academic Building  
125 Paterson Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
**732-235-8100 ext. 221 or 248**

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital  
Somerset Blood Donor Room  
110 Rehill Avenue, Somerville NJ 08876  
**908-285-7467**

Platelet appointments are also available at select blood drives in the communities we serve. Call today to discuss your scheduling options with one of our staff.

**RWJ**Barnabas  
HEALTH

[giveblood.rwjbh.org](http://giveblood.rwjbh.org)

# Become a Platelet Donor

A very special type of blood donation



You're the right type to be someone's hero

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## What is Platelet Pheresis?

Platelet pheresis (fuh-REE-sis) is a unique type of blood donation that makes it possible to collect a single blood component, platelets. One platelet pheresis donation provides as many platelets as six to eight whole blood donations.

## Why are Platelets so important?

Platelets are essential for blood clotting. They are routinely needed to support cancer therapy, open-heart surgery, blood disorders and organ transplants. Platelets must be transfused within five days, requiring the supply to be constantly replenished.

## How is Platelet Pheresis done?

During a platelet pheresis donation, blood is drawn from one arm and passed through a cell separator, carefully removing platelets (and some plasma too). The red blood cells are returned to the donor. The donation does not significantly decrease the number of platelets in the donor's body and the donated platelets are quickly replaced. Less than one pint of blood is drawn out of the donor at any one time.

Each donation is collected using a prepackaged, sterile and disposable kit. The kits are used only once and then disposed of safely.

## How long does it take?

The length of time you will be donating platelets depends on several physical factors but on average **actual platelet pheresis procedure takes between 1 and 1.5 hours (60-90 mins)**. Plan to be at the Blood Center for approximately two hours. This includes registration, medical history interview, mini physical and refreshments afterwards.



## PLATELET FACTS:

- Platelets are made in your bone marrow. They are the smallest blood component in our bodies.
- Their primary function is to promote clotting to control bleeding.
- Patients that are being treated for cancer and have chemo therapies often require platelet transfusions. In fact, every 15 minutes a cancer patient, trauma victim or person with a serious chronic illness need a platelet transfusion to survive.
- The shelf life of platelets is only 7 days. Donors are needed every day to replenish the supply.

## Who is eligible?

Platelet pheresis donors must meet the same medical criteria as whole blood donors and must have suitable venous access.

It is important not to take aspirin or products containing aspirin for two days prior to being a platelet donor. Females who have been pregnant may not be able to participate as a platelet donor. Please speak to one of our staff members to discuss this new regulation.

## How often can I donate?

A platelet donor can give more often than a whole blood donor because the body replaces platelets within 24 hours.

## What about Whole Blood/Automated Red Cell donations?

You may still donate whole blood or automated red cells after making a platelet donation. Blood Center staff will be happy to explain donation eligibility.

## Are appointments necessary?

Platelet pheresis procedures are scheduled by appointment so that we may meet the daily needs of the patients we serve. It is important to notify the Blood Center as soon as possible if you are unable to keep your appointment so another donor can be scheduled to fill your appointment time. Although appointments are preferred, we usually accommodate donors on short notice so please call!

