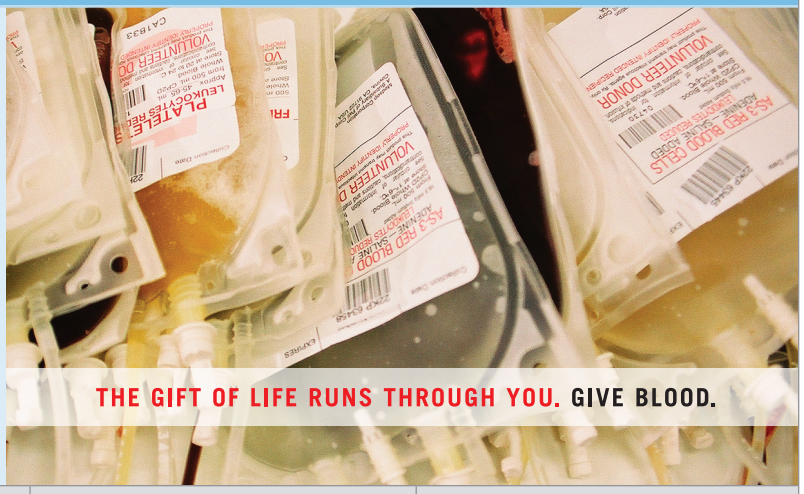
Blood Components

American Red Cross

There are about one billion red blood cells in two to three drops of blood, and for every 600 red blood cells, there are about 40 platelets and one white cell.



WHOLE BLOOD	RED CELLS	PLATELETS	PLASMA
Whole blood contains red cells, white cells and platelets suspended in plasma. Because patients seldom require all of the components of whole blood, it is rarely transfused as a unit. Instead, it is separated into units of red cells, plasma and platelets before it reaches a patient.	Red cells contain hemoglobin, an iron-containing protein that carries oxygen throughout the body and gives blood its red color. Donors must have a hemoglobin level of 13.3 gm/dl to donate automated double red cells. The percentage of blood volume composed of red cells is called hematocrit.	Platelets are vital to life because they help prevent massive blood loss by helping your blood to clot. Because they are sticky cells, they need to be in constant motion after they are donated or they will clump and cannot be transfused.	Plasma is the liquid portion of the blood that carries platelets, red cells and proteins throughout the body. Plasma is made up of 90 percent water and is more than 55 percent of your total blood volume.
PATIENTS WHO NEED:			
trauma or surgery patients	trauma or surgery patients	cancer patients, organ transplant patients, surgical patients	burn patients, bleeding disorders
SHELF LIFE:			
42 days	42 days	5 days	1 year (frozen)
ESTIMATED DONATION TIME:			
1 hour 15 minutes	1 hour 25 minutes	1 ½ - 2 ½ hours	1 hour 15 minutes
HOW OFTEN CAN YOU DONATE:			
every 56 days, up to 6 times per year	automated double red cells: every 112 days, 3 times per year	we recommend every 2 - 4 weeks, up to 24 times per year	every 28 days, up to 13 times per year

Call 1.800.GIVE.LIFE or visit givebloodgivelife. org to learn more about the need for blood or to schedule your next appointment.