

Blood donation myth busters: 2 **SHOT** Serious Hazards of Transfusion

MYTH: 'I cannot donate blood if I am over 70 years old.'

FACT: There are regulations in place concerning the age at which donors can donate. Since 2009, UK donors over the age of 70 can donate as long as they have given a donation in the preceding two years.

When someone has donated prior to their 66th birthday, they can continue to donate provided they are eligible and donate regularly, or until they wish to stop donating. They will need to have a satisfactory health screening prior to each donation as is standard practice, to ensure the safety of both the donor as well the recipient.

[Want to know more... just click the link](#)

MYTH: 'The minimum haemoglobin (Hb) level requirement is the same for all types of donations.'

FACT: The minimum Hb concentration requirement is different for different types of donations. The Hb level is estimated for every potential donor each time they present to donate. Taking a donation from a person with a haemoglobin level below the recommended value may make them anaemic.

Minimum Hb requirements:
Whole blood/component donors: females are required to have 125g/L or more, males 135g/L or more, and when the gender is not disclosed, 125g/L or more.

Plasma only donors: females are required to have 120g/L or more, males 130g/L or more, and when the gender is not disclosed, 120g/L or more.

[Want to know more... just click the link](#)

MYTH: 'UK Blood Services do not collect plasma for medicines (PFM) such as albumin or clotting factors.'

FACT: NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) and Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) have started to collect PFM. Plasma to produce medicines, such as immunoglobulin therapies, has not been collected from UK donors for more than 20 years, as a precautionary measure against the risk of variant Creutzfeldt Jakob Disease (vCJD). Following a [comprehensive safety review](#), the collection of plasma to produce lifesaving medicines for the benefit of UK patients has started.

Plasma For Medicines (PFM) is about collecting plasma which can be used to produce medicines such as immunoglobulins which helps save the lives of many thousands of people whose immune systems are affected for e.g., when weakened following cancer treatment or due to autoimmune conditions. Plasma can be donated by either new donors, or donors who wish to change from donating whole blood or platelets.

[Want to know more... just click this link for NHSBT and here for SNBTS](#)

MYTH: 'I cannot donate if I am taking any medication'

FACT: A donor who takes medication/s may still be eligible to donate providing they meet the guidelines that is in place at the time to ensure safety for them as the donor as well as for the recipient.

Some drugs may make a donor ineligible to donate; this may be either due to the medication itself or due to the underlying medical condition. In general, however, providing a donor is healthy and well, when they present at a donation session and they meet the Donor Selection Guidelines, they may still be eligible to donate.

[Want to know more... just click the link](#)

**MYTHS
BUSTED**