

WHAT IS DOUBLE RED CELL APHERESIS (OR 2RBC)?

Automated apheresis (or 2RBC) lets you give two units of red blood cells in one visit to the blood center and returns all other components to you.

WHY SHOULD I DONATE DOUBLE RED CELLS?

Chances are that if you are thinking about donating blood, you understand the importance of helping other people. All blood donations are important, but a two unit red cell donation reduces the patient's exposure to multiple blood donors (because two units are from one donor). And a double unit red cell donation saves you time. You can give twice as much in just one visit to the blood center.

IS COLLECTING TWO UNITS OF RED BLOOD CELLS FROM THE SAME DONATION SAFE?

Yes. While you are donating two red cell units, the total volume of the donation is slightly less than that of a single whole blood donation. You will notice below there are different eligibility requirements for red cell apheresis donors.

WILL I FEEL THE SAME AS WHEN I GIVE WHOLE BLOOD?

Most donors report that they feel better. First, we return all your plasma and platelets, plus 500 ml of saline. So you never lose the liquid portion of your blood, which also carries nutrients throughout your body. Second, the apheresis procedure uses a smaller needle, which may be more comfortable than donating whole blood.

DOESN'T THIS APHERESIS PROCEDURE TAKE LONGER THAN GIVING WHOLE BLOOD?

Yes, the procedure takes 15-20 minutes longer than a regular whole blood donation.

Since two units are collected from one donor, the patient's exposure to multiple donors is greatly reduced. Also, you may serve twice as many patients with a single donation. With enough donors participating, the adequacy of the regional blood supply is significantly enhanced.

WHO SHOULD BE DONATING DOUBLE RED CELLS?

With our red cell systems we can target specific blood types for collections. Most blood types are needed at all times, but from time to time there are acute shortages of a specific blood type. Check with us to see if your type is needed. If you don't know your type, we can tell you.

WHAT ARE THE DONOR REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

Men must weigh a minimum of 130 pounds and be at least 5'1" in height. Additionally, the iron content of your blood must measure 40% or 13.3 hemoglobin.

Women must weigh a minimum of 150 pounds and be at least 5'5" in height. Hemoglobin requirements are the same as those listed above for men.

Because you are donating two units of red cells, you must wait 16 weeks or 112 days between donations. This is twice that required for a whole blood donation. However, you have given twice as many red blood cells in less time than two regular whole blood donations and you do not have to visit the blood center as often. This means we won't be bugging you as often.

IS RED CELL DONATION TREATED DIFFERENTLY THAN A WHOLE BLOOD DONATION?

If you are giving red cells through apheresis you are treated no differently and may participate in any programs available at our center each time you donate. In fact, double red cells count as two donations.