

Answers about Giving Blood at MMH

Have you ever thought of being a blood donor? The blood bank at MMH processes over 900 units of blood each year. We are fortunate to have over 600 active donors who generously give blood when needed. When called, the donors give one pint of blood which has the potential to help up to two people here at Montrose Memorial Hospital and the San Juan Cancer Center.

I know I've talked to you about giving blood a couple times however; I wanted to clear up some misconceptions about giving blood in our community. When you donate blood at MMH, the blood stays in our blood bank and is used by patients in our hospital or at the Cancer Center. When you give blood at one of the mobile blood banks that come to town, the blood *may* be used at MMH if we need it however, we have to purchase it back from the people who operate the mobile unit. They don't "reserve" it for people in Montrose nor do they "give" it to our blood bank to use. The blood is used as needed for their patients and the patients of other hospital they serve. Don't be misled if you are told "yes, the blood is used for patients in Montrose" because that isn't completely accurate. Currently we rarely use blood from other sources. So far this year, we have used 706 units of blood from Montrose Hospital donors and have only had to purchase 60 units from other sources. As you can see, we rarely use blood from other sources, so if you want to assure that your blood is used for patients at Montrose Hospital or the San Juan Cancer Center, be sure to give blood at the MMH blood bank.

Giving blood at MMH takes a total of 30 minutes: only 7-10 minutes to draw your blood, plus some time for registration, pre-donation health screening, and your snack/rest period afterward. It is VERY simple – all you need to do is call 240-7220 to schedule a time that works for you. If you would like to bring your office staff, your service club, or members of your family, we are happy to set aside a special time for you and your group.

To be eligible to give blood, a donor must be at least 17 years old, weigh 110 pounds or more and be in good health. If you have any questions about taking medications and donating blood, let us know and our staff will advise you about your eligibility to donate. If you have a tattoo or body piercing, the U.S. health advisers voted to continue a policy that requires people who have been pierced or tattooed to put off donating blood for a year after the procedure, but said those who have received acupuncture can safely give blood.

If you are currently a blood donor, thanks for "giving the gift of life." If you are interested in becoming a donor or have any questions, please call us at 240-7220.