

Remember you cannot get HIV or hepatitis by giving blood – we use sterile equipment that is used only once.

Where can I get an HIV or hepatitis test done?

You can get a confidential test for HIV and hepatitis through your own doctor, or for free confidential testing contact either a sexual health service or the New Zealand AIDS Foundation.

Please **do not give** blood simply to get an HIV or hepatitis test.

Who can I talk to?

If you are worried about HIV or hepatitis, you can talk to our nurse or doctor at the blood collection session. All discussions are treated in strict confidence.

If you would prefer to talk with someone that you know, you can talk to your own Doctor.

Information and advice can also be obtained from your own Doctor, a Sexual Health Clinic, or for 24/7 recorded information call the New Zealand AIDS Foundation AIDS Hotline 0800 80 AIDS (0800 80 2437).

What happens if my blood donation tests positive for HIV or hepatitis?

You will be informed of a positive test result and we will arrange for another sample of blood to be tested to confirm our results. We will also make arrangements for you to obtain further support, clinical advice and treatment from specialist health services.

HIV infection in New Zealand

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is the virus that leads to the range of infections called Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). HIV infection is a global health issue. HIV is acquired through contact with body fluids such as blood and also semen, and breast milk.

New Zealand has one of the lowest levels of HIV infection in the world. In New Zealand, the population groups most at risk of HIV infection are:

- Men who have sex with men (MSM) including those who also have sex with women;
- Anyone from countries with high rates of HIV prevalence;
- Injecting Drug Users (IDUs);

In many parts of the world heterosexual contact is also one of the most likely means of acquiring HIV infection. This is particularly the case in Africa, parts of Asia and in Central and South America. New Zealand Blood Service identifies countries as 'high risk' for heterosexual infection using data produced by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

New Zealand Blood Service uses a combination approach to reduce the risk of HIV transmission. This involves self identification of people who are in a high risk group for HIV. Anyone from these groups is asked not to donate blood. Each donation is still tested for HIV infection.

Blood available for transfusion in New Zealand is recognised as one of the safest blood supplies in the world. Please help us to keep it safe. If you are in any doubt then please do not donate.

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SAFE BLOOD

STARTS WITH YOU

Please do not give blood without reading this leaflet.

NZBLOOD
Te Ratonga Toto O Aotearoa

Help us to keep transfusions safe

Thank you for volunteering to be a blood donor; your gift could save someone's life.

Blood transfusions in New Zealand are safer now than they've ever been and we need your help to maintain this excellent standard of safety. We test all donations thoroughly for dangerous viruses but viruses such as HIV (the virus that leads to AIDS) and hepatitis B and C cannot always be detected in the early stages of infection.

In fact, sometimes it may take several weeks or even months between the time a person is infected and the time the infection is recognised by current tests. This means your blood might not show any sign of infection but if undetected could still pass on a disease if it is transfused to a patient.

The chances of this happening are very small because of the range of ways used to reduce this risk. One of these methods is to ask anyone who, based on their behaviour, might be at increased risk of becoming infected with HIV or hepatitis to not give blood. No one wants there to be any risk of infected blood being passed to a patient.

If, after reading this leaflet you are still unsure or you need help, please talk in complete confidence to our nurse or doctor.

Or, if you need time to think about it, it's quite alright to leave the collection session without giving blood – no questions asked.



It's important you read the following sections before you decide to donate

You must **NEVER** give blood if:

- You, or any of your sexual partners have (or had) AIDS or a positive test for HIV.
- You carry the hepatitis B or C virus.
- You have ever injected yourself, even once, with drugs not prescribed by a Doctor.
- You have haemophilia or a related clotting disorder and have received treatment with plasma derived clotting factor concentrates at any time.
- You think you need an HIV or hepatitis test.

You must not give blood for **12 months**:

- Following oral or anal sex with or without a condom with another man (if you are male).
- After engaging in sex work (prostitution) or accepting payment in exchange for sex.
- After leaving a country in which you have lived and which is considered to be high risk of HIV infection (includes sub Saharan Africa and parts of Asia. Full list available at blood collection sessions and at www.nzblood.co.nz).

You must not give blood for **12 months**:

- Following sex with anyone:
 - whom you know carries the hepatitis B or C virus.
 - who is a sex worker (prostitute).
 - who has ever injected themselves with drugs not prescribed by a Doctor.
 - who lives in or comes from a country considered high risk for HIV infection.
 - who has haemophilia or a related blood clotting disorder and received treatment with plasma derived clotting factor concentrates at any time.
- If you are a woman, after engaging in sex with a man who has had oral or anal sex with another man.

What if I use condoms every time?

- Condoms reduce the risk, but there is always a very small risk, if the condom breaks or is not used properly, of transmission.
- The relative risk of transmission is much higher with a transfusion of infected blood than with sexual intercourse with an infected partner. This justifies a more stringent approach to risk reduction for transfusion.
- NZBS policies position New Zealand as having one of the least restrictive blood donor deferral criteria in the world, while still ensuring the safety of the blood supply.