



Our patients depend on your gift every day. Without your platelets, these kids cannot have life-saving surgeries, be nursed back from cancer, or function on a daily basis.

Your donation helps our kids be kids.

Be a hero and give the gift of life.



Children's National™

111 Michigan Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20010
Phone: 202-476-5437
Fax: 202-476-6526
ChildrensNational.org



Children's National™

Edward J. Miller, Sr., Blood Donor Center
Platelet Donations

Contact Information:

ChildrensNational.org/DonateBlood

Schedule an appointment
online or by calling
202-476-KIDS (5437).

If you cannot make a donation
at the hospital, the
Bloodmobile is available
throughout the community
during the week as well as on
weekends. Call 202-476-5437
for information and to
schedule a blood drive near
you.



Blood Donation FAQs

What are platelets?

Platelets are a critical component in the clotting process. Children of all ages depend on platelets whether it be for chemotherapy, open heart surgery, or emergency-based situations. Platelets expire after five days, so there is always a need for platelets and platelet donors.

Who is eligible?

People eligible to donate whole blood also are eligible to donate platelets. To donate platelets, you are required to:

- Have a good platelet count
- Refrain from taking aspirin and/or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS, such as Ibuprofen) three days prior to donating
- Have meals rich in calcium (yogurt, milk, etc.) before donation
- Increase your fluid intake before donating and drink two 8 oz. glasses of water the day of your donation

For further questions about eligibility, please contact the Children's National Blood Donor Center at 202-476-5437.

Give the gift of life.

What is the process like?

After your medical history and vital signs are checked, a small sample of blood is drawn to check your iron and platelet counts. A needle is then inserted and the blood donation begins, flowing into an apheresis machine that spins and separates into three components: red blood cells, platelets, and plasma.

The donation process approximately takes one to two hours, depending on the person. Red blood cells also can be donated using the same machine, if you are eligible.



How often can I donate?

When donating by apheresis, you can donate platelets, plasma, and/or red blood cells. The Blood Donor Center at Children's National monitors what you have donated and how much of each product you donated. On the day of donation, your cell counts will determine what you can donate. The minimum platelet count to donate platelets is 150,000 uL.

The Children's National Blood Donor Center will evaluate your venous access prior to donating. Venous access plays a very important roll in apheresis.

If you meet eligibility, you can donate platelets every 14 days, plasma every 28 days, and red blood cells every 56 days. You also can request to only donate platelets or plasma. Our goal is to provide donors the option to donate what is needed for the patients at Children's National.

What are directed donations?

Many parents who have children at the hospital understand how important platelets are to their child. Parents, friends, and family members can donate platelets directly to a patient through a process called directed donations. To arrange a directed donation, ask the child's nurse or doctor for a directed donor form. Return the completed form to the Blood Donor Center and we will set up an appointment.