

This is Talia Ciarabellini from the Northern California Community Blood Bank with a community comment.

There are many myths surrounding blood donation, common misconceptions that prevent people from becoming blood donors. From medication concerns to travel, some people might not think they are eligible to donate for a variety of reasons. I would like to share some information today to help you understand ~~some of~~ the most common myths about donating and perhaps help you decide to become a blood donor.

Have you ever heard that you can't donate if you're taking medications? The truth is most medications are no problem for blood donation, even aspirin. Aspirin affects platelet function, so if you are taking aspirin, we just like to know so we ^{don't} collect platelet products from you. Other medications for conditions such as blood pressure, depression, anxiety, hormones, pain, and cholesterol are all fine. The medications we are concerned about are on a list we ask all blood donors to review before donating. You are welcome to review this list or ^{on line} call with any questions.

^{Many} Certain medical conditions are also acceptable as long as certain criteria are met. A past cancer diagnosis does not necessarily mean you can't donate. Many types of treated cancer are acceptable, after a negative follow up and one year wait from the last treatment. Diabetics can donate, even when taking medications. We just want to make sure that your glucose levels are under control. Even some heart conditions are acceptable as long as the condition has been medically evaluated and you have no physical restrictions or current symptoms.

Donors who travel outside the United States may also be eligible to donate. We utilize a book of maps based on CDC criteria for malaria travel, and evaluate each donor's travel to determine eligibility. We look at recent travel to determine if you visited an area with malaria risk. Areas without malaria, such as Europe, are not a problem for recent travel. However, past time spent in Europe may defer a donor if certain time length is met. Give us a call ahead of time if you'd like. We'd be happy to evaluate your travels and let you know if your travel itinerary permits donating blood.

^{@ 443-8004} I hope that I have helped bust some common myths about donating blood. Please feel free to give us a call with questions about your eligibility to donate. We're happy to answer questions and help you decide if donating blood is right for you.

This has been Talia Ciarabellini from the Northern California Community Blood Bank with a community comment on KINS.

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