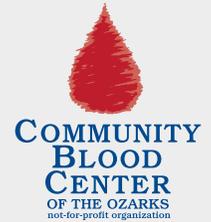




# universal donor DIGEST



Celebrating the lifesaving potential of type O negative blood donors

February - March 2014

## Welcome to U-Donor Digest!

You are a member of a unique lifesaving club. Membership is exclusive and is determined before your life even begins. Membership dues consist of giving a part of yourself several times a year, providing a direct benefit to all. This new bulletin is just for you; the type O negative donor. We'll give you tips on getting the most out of your donation, tell you stories of lives that have been saved through your efforts and let you know about unique opportunities exclusively for U-donors.

## Percentages tell the U-donor story

Type O negative donors represent just six percent of the U.S. population, but the blood is used at up to double that rate in our area hospitals. That's why we ask more from our Universal Donors.

## Why am I type O negative?



We inherit our blood types from our parents. If you're type O negative, it means a couple of things have happened. First, you received a type O antigen from each of your parents, as opposed to an A or B antigen. A and B antigens are dominant, meaning that the presence of one of these antigens received from either parent will prevent you from being type O. You also received what's called an Rh factor from each parent. The Rh factor is simply a protein that is found on the covering of the red blood cells. If your red blood cells have this protein, you are Rh positive. If your blood cells don't have this protein, you are Rh negative. Just as everyone inherits ABO genes, every person inherits one Rh factor gene from each parent. The Rh-positive gene is the dominant gene when paired with an Rh-negative gene. That's what makes type O negative donors so unique. It's a genetic gift, and giving to CBCO allows you to share that gift with others.

## O negative blood helped to save my life

The great thing about O negative blood is the universal aspect of it. It quite literally is the first thing that is reached for in a hospital setting when someone's life is in jeopardy. Take MaKayla Smith for example. An ATV accident left her with a broken back, a concussion and a severe foot injury. She was transfused several times both during her initial treatment and subsequent surgeries.

When area patients need it the most, U-Donors are there. That's why you should be proud of your membership in this exclusive club.



# Eat right before your next donation

## Low iron levels can stop U-Donors in their tracks

You're all ready for your blood donation. You've carved time out of your busy day. The blood drive is in full swing by the time you arrive. You confidently answer the questionnaire. Blood pressure and pulse? Checked. Temperature and arm check? No problems there. But that tiny drop of blood that's taken and tested stops you cold. As much as you want to save lives, you can't, at least not on this day. Disappointed, you leave the blood drive with your lifesaving promise unfulfilled.

That tiny drop of blood you give during your medical exam is checked for its hemoglobin, or iron level. Blood donors must have adequate iron in their blood in order to be allowed to give. Inadequate iron is the number one reason that a potential donor is turned away at the blood drive. Adequate iron levels are just as important for donors as a willingness to give. Fortunately there are things you can do to help ensure that you will be able to provide that universal donation.

## It's all about fuel

While proper hydration in the hours leading up to your blood donation is important, a proper diet that is balanced with nutritious content is just as important. Your mother was right. Eating your vegetables is really good for you. Lean meats can improve your protein and iron levels. Taking an iron supplement is an option. Also, avoiding food and drink that diminishes your iron levels is a good practice when you get closer to the day you are to give. We've provided a handy chart at the right that will help you know how to maximize your lifesaving potential as a U-Donor. Your blood is good for all. A healthy diet is good for all as well.



To boost the amount of iron in your diet, try these foods:

- ◆ **Red meat**
- ◆ **Egg yolks**
- ◆ **Dark, leafy greens (spinach, collards)**
- ◆ **Dried fruit (prunes, raisins)**
- ◆ **Iron-enriched cereals and grains (check the labels)**
- ◆ **Mollusks (oysters, clams, scallops)**
- ◆ **Turkey or chicken giblets**
- ◆ **Beans, lentils, chick peas and soybeans**
- ◆ **Liver**
- ◆ **Artichokes**

And here's a tip: If you eat iron-rich foods along with foods that provide plenty of vitamin C, your body can better absorb the iron.



### Get "Social"

Become a fan of saving lives by partnering with us on social media. You'll see us tweeting and posting prior to your blood drives, so be sure to click "Retweet" on Twitter and "Share" on Facebook to help spread the word.

Follow us here:

- ◆ [Facebook.com/OzarksBlood](https://www.facebook.com/OzarksBlood)
- ◆ [Twitter.com/OzarksBlood](https://twitter.com/OzarksBlood)
- ◆ [YouTube.com/OzarksBlood](https://www.youtube.com/OzarksBlood)

## By the numbers

**56** The number of days you have to wait between donations.

The approximate percentage of type **12** O negative blood that's used in our area hospitals.

The approximate percentage of Americans that have type O negative blood. **6**