



# Coastal Bend Blood Center

# Quick Facts:

## Common Blood Donation Myths

**MYTH:** You should fast before donating.

**FACT:** Fasting before a blood donation will actually have a negative effect on your ability to donate. Donors should eat a good meal at least 30 minutes before donating. However, you should abstain from tobacco and alcohol before and after donating.

**MYTH:** You can't donate if you are taking medication.

**FACT:** Many medications, including those for high blood pressure, thyroid and birth control, are acceptable as long as your "mini-physical" shows that your blood pressure, temperature and blood hemoglobin levels are okay. You usually can donate once you have completely recovered from surgery or illness. If you have questions regarding your eligibility, please call the main office at 361-855-4943 or 800-299-4943.

**MYTH:** You can contract HIV/AIDS or other diseases from donating blood.

**FACT:** You cannot contract AIDS or any other diseases from giving blood. Your blood will be drawn with a sterile needle, which is individually packaged for your use only. After your donation, our staff will dispose of the blood collection equipment appropriately.

**MYTH:** You can not donate if you have previously been deferred due to a low iron level.

**FACT:** Iron levels can fluctuate from day to day depending on a number of factors, including diet. A low iron deferral is only temporary and donors are eligible to donate as early as the next day. If your iron level tends to run low, it is recommended you add iron rich food to your diet, such as red meats, dried fruits and nuts, prior to donating.

**MYTH:** You need all the blood in your body.

**FACT:** The adult human body has 8-12 pints. A blood donation takes one pint. The loss of this single pint of blood is not significant enough to have an effect on your overall well-being. After donating blood, your body begins replacing the lost cells almost immediately and takes only two to four weeks to fully return to normal.

**MYTH:** You can not donate if you are diabetic.

**FACT:** Diabetics can almost always donate blood. If the donor is feeling well and healthy, experience has shown that diabetics can safely donate without throwing their blood sugar or medication level out of balance. There is also no danger to the recipients of getting diabetes from the blood transfusion. These donors are strongly encouraged to eat a full meal prior to donating.

For more information, call the Coastal Bend Blood Center at 1-800-299-4943  
or visit our website at [www.coastalbendbloodcenter.org](http://www.coastalbendbloodcenter.org)