



# Neonatal platelet donors

Why  
you are  
special



**GIVE BLOOD**

**You have been given this leaflet as you have been identified as a neonatal platelet donor. This means your platelet donation fulfils a very strict set of criteria which makes it rare and particularly precious, as it can be used to treat tiny babies.**

## **What are platelets?**

Platelets are tiny gold-coloured cells in your blood which help it clot and stop bleeding. Platelet transfusions are often given to patients who develop low platelet counts due to an underlying illness, medications such as chemotherapy or severe bleeding.



## What does neonatal mean?

Neonate is the term used to describe a newborn baby within the first four weeks after birth. Neonatal platelets are platelets given to neonates and babies up to one year old.

## What is so special about a neonatal platelet donor?

Neonatal platelet donors need to:

- donate at least twice in a two-year period
- be free from all infections that we test for (Hepatitis B virus, Hepatitis C virus, Hepatitis E virus, HIV, Syphilis and Human T lymphotropic virus (HTLV)) and
- be free from certain antibodies which could affect babies.

As you currently meet these criteria, you are known as an **'accredited'** donor.

You are also negative for Cytomegalovirus (CMV) antibodies. CMV is a common virus that is usually harmless to those who are fit and well, but it can cause harm to babies.

Each adult sized donation that you give can be split into four neonatal platelet doses. This means if you normally give a double donation of platelets, we can make eight neonatal platelet doses.

## Why do we need regular neonatal platelet donors?

Unfortunately, platelets last just seven days after they've been donated, so we rely on people like you to donate regularly throughout the year, to ensure that babies across the whole of Scotland can receive the platelet support they need.

As your platelets are so precious, the donor team may ask you to come on a different day or leave a different number of weeks between your appointments. This is to ensure that we can provide platelets for babies when they are most needed.

## Where can I find out more?

If you have any further questions, please get in touch using either the 'contact us' form at [scotblood.co.uk](https://scotblood.co.uk) or email us at [nss.snbtsenquiry@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.snbtsenquiry@nhs.scot). A member of the platelet team will be in touch.



**Alternatively, if you have a query or would like to book your next appointment please contact your local platelet department in your usual way.**

If you are no longer able to donate platelets, please let us know.

**On behalf of patients across Scotland – thank you.**

### **Contact us**

**t: 0345 90 90 999**

**e: [nss.snbtSENquiry@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.snbtSENquiry@nhs.scot)**

**w: [scotblood.co.uk](http://scotblood.co.uk)**

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