



HLA High specification platelet donors

Why
you are
special



GIVE BLOOD

You have been given this leaflet as you have been identified as an HLA high specification platelet donor. This means you have a special platelet type which allows your donation to be used more effectively in treating patients with complex transfusion needs.

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 undergoing cancer treatment to either prevent or stop bleeding.



What is special about my platelet type?

Human Leucocyte Antigens (HLA) are present on the surface of platelets.

An antigen is a substance or molecule that can trigger an immune response; a defence mechanism against harmful substances such as bacteria, viruses and other pathogens.

As an HLA high specification platelet donor, your platelets express HLA antigens that are a match to a high percentage of the population. From a panel of around 1,000 donors, only around 3-5% are HLA high specification platelet donors, so your platelets are very special.

Why do some patients need special 'matched' platelets?

An immune response may result in the production of a substance known as an antibody. People can potentially develop antibodies to HLA antigens if they have had a transfusion, pregnancy, or a transplant. In some cases, patients with HLA antibodies may not respond to platelet transfusions, as the transfused platelets are destroyed by these antibodies.

These patients need to receive HLA matched platelets, where the HLA antigens of the transfused platelets match the HLA antigens on the patient's own platelets.

If these patients do not receive matched platelets, they are at risk of bleeding, as many of them are undergoing treatments that cause low platelet counts, such as chemotherapy.

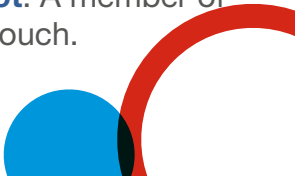
As an HLA high specification platelet donor, your platelets are a good match for many of these patients.

How can I help?

Unfortunately, platelets only last for seven days after donation, so we rely on our HLA high specification donors to donate regularly throughout the year, to ensure that there is a steady supply of platelets to support patients across the whole of Scotland. As such, the donor team may ask you to donate on a different day or wait longer between appointments. This is to ensure we have matched platelets available when they're needed most and to make the best possible use of your precious donation and provide the most effective treatment to patients.

I would like some more information.

If you have any further questions, please get in touch using either the 'contact us' form at scotblood.co.uk or email us at 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

w: scotblood.co.uk

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