

How often can you attend and will your blood be used to save lives?

The IBTS aims to provide a safe and sustainable supply of blood to Irish hospitals while ensuring both patient safety and donor wellbeing.

With this in mind, providing you are an eligible HH patient, and also meet standard blood donation criteria, **you will be able to donate every 90 days** i.e. up to 4 times a year normally. **And your blood will be used as part of the national blood supply to hospitals.**

When you become a blood donor but are temporarily ineligible to donate blood e.g. due to a travel deferral, as long as it is over 90 days since you were last venesected by the IBTS, we will take your blood; however, this blood will not be available to the national supply. Please note that if you as a donor are feeling unwell when you attend a clinic, we will not venesect you.

Finally, if under our guidelines you are permanently ineligible to donate, then unfortunately like the rest of the population, you will be unable to attend blood donation clinics in any instances.

Important information about your on-going care as a HH patient

IBTS collects blood from volunteer donors for the benefit of hospital patients. All donors remain under the care of their doctor for monitoring of any medical conditions including Haemochromatosis. IBTS does not monitor donor ferritin levels. **HH donors must have an annual ferritin check with their consultant / doctor, and not exceed 300 ng/ml for female, 400 ng/ml for male.**

All donors receive a 'thank you for attending' text message post clinic so you will have a record of when you have attended any IBTS clinics.

How can I as an eligible HH patient and blood donor help?

- Your blood may no longer be discarded and could now be used to save others' lives. We aim to collect 12,000 donations annually from HH donors (approx. 10% of the national blood supply).
- For many HH patients, this offers you the chance to attend clinics closer to home and at a convenient time
- You will receive your venesection in an environment where you are a donor, not a patient, and you will be helping release day care beds and resources for other health service treatments

What do I need to do next?

- Check if you meet the HH maintenance eligibility criteria (check with your GP/Consultant or call IBTS)
- Check if you meet current blood donation eligibility criteria at (<https://www.giveblood.ie/can-i-give-blood>)
- If eligible, find your local clinic on www.giveblood.ie or call 1800 731 137 for more information

The demand for blood is constant, with IBTS needing 3,000 donations a week just to maintain hospital supply, particularly for certain RhD negative blood groups. We are keen to expand the eligible donor base especially with potential donors like you who will return regularly and are familiar with the venesection process. Ultimately we hope to source up to 10% of the annual blood supply from HH patients who become donors.

Thank you for considering becoming a blood donor, and please do not hesitate to contact us at www.giveblood.ie or phone **1800 731 137** if you have any queries.

giveblood.ie

Patients with Hereditary Haemochromatosis (HH) can now give blood at any IBTS blood donation clinics*



Be a life saver!
HH blood can now
be used to save lives.

Attend blood
donation clinics
convenient to you.

*Subject to HH maintenance and blood donation eligibility criteria.

How can a HH patient save lives?

The Irish Blood Transfusion Service (IBTS) is now accepting patients with Hereditary Haemochromatosis (HH) to give blood, who

- meet certain conditions in relation to their HH maintenance, and also
- meet standard blood donation criteria

at all blood donation clinics nationwide, including community clinics.

These patients/donors do not require a prescription to attend their local blood donation clinic (excluding weekly Stillorgan Friday therapeutic clinic).

HH donors must ensure they have an annual ferritin check with their GP/Consultant, with same not to exceed 300 ng/ml (female) and 400 ng/ml (male)

What HH eligibility criteria applies?

To be able to give blood, an individual with HH

- Must have completed iron depletion therapy with their GP/Consultant, and be in the maintenance phase (defined by IBTS for donation purposes as requiring no more than 8 venesections per year)
- Must have at least 1 therapeutic venesection without complication
- Can attend an IBTS blood donation clinic up to 4 times annually, with minimum 90 days elapsed between venesections and must not have had any venesections in 2 weeks prior to an IBTS clinic
- Must not suffer from serious complications as a result of HH such as liver cirrhosis, cardiomyopathy, cardiac arrhythmias, or insulin dependent diabetes mellitus
- First time HH blood donors must be aged 69 and under. We currently cannot accept any first time HH donors aged 70 or above, even if they have had previous venesections outside of the IBTS.
- Regular HH blood donors can be accepted over 70 and up to 79 once they meet the whole blood eligibility criteria and have a GP fitness to donate letter.
- In addition, individuals with HH who don't and have never required venesection, can give blood.

What blood donation criteria applies? You may not be able to donate blood for the following reasons:

REASON	DEFERAL PERIOD
Under 18 years of age	Until 18th birthday
Weight less than 50kgs (7st, 12lbs)	Unless/Until Minimum Weight is Reached
Weight more than 158kgs (25 stone)	Unless/Until Weight is Less Than 158 kgs
Uncomplicated dental filling or scaling	24 Hours
Cough, cold or other minor illness	Until Recovered, i.e. No symptoms
Minor Injury	Until Healed / Recovered
Dental extraction	One Week (minimum)
Flu or other infectious illness	Two Weeks After Finishing Antibiotics and Following Full Recovery from Symptoms
Surgical Procedure	Two Weeks – Six Months (please ask)
Travel to a Tropical Area	Three Months
Endoscopy (Scope)	Four Months
Ear, Face or Body Piercing	Four Months
Travel to a Malarial Area	Twelve Months
Pregnant or had a baby	Twelve Months
Sexual Activity	Individually assessed Please check giveblood.ie for specific criteria
Syphilis and Gnorrhoea	Indefinite
All other STIs	Please Ask
Cardiac (Heart) condition	Please Ask
Cancer	Indefinite
Blood transfusion after 1st January 1980 in the Republic of Ireland or at any time outside the ROI.	Indefinite
Ever Injected Drugs – even once or a long time ago	Indefinite

These are some of the common reasons for deferral but there may be other reasons you are not eligible to donate, please see www.giveblood.ie