

IS3 Preparing to Give Blood

Tips for a successful venesection

Making the Appointment

You may not always be able to choose your time, but if possible, pick a time that suits you. Choose a time when you won't be rushed or stressed. Some people prefer mornings, others afternoons.

On the Day Before

Get a good night's rest.
Make sure you're feeling well.
Drink plenty of fluids the day before, especially in warm weather.

On the Day

Have at least three glasses of water in the three hours before. Your blood volume goes down a little when you give blood.

Eat something salty in the 12 hours before. You lose about three grams of salt with each donation, so this is your chance to eat something salty, like chips guilt-free. Have a good meal in the three hours before.

On the Couch

Take a music player with your favourite music and headphones. There's nothing like a little distraction to take your mind off things.

Do these muscle exercises before the needle goes in or comes out and before getting up if you feel dizzy, hot or nauseous

- Cross your legs
- Squeeze your inner thigh and abdominal muscles
- Stretch your ankle. Hold for five seconds then relax five seconds.
- Repeat five times then switch legs.

After giving blood

- Take it easy
- Have a snack – something salty is good.
- Have a drink – water, cordial or energy drinks.

Do

- Keep the bandage on for at least 2 hours
- Continue to drink fluids – at least three glasses of water or juice

Don't

- Stand for long periods (sorry, no window shopping on the way home).
- Avoid standing in long queues or crowded public transport
- Get overheated. Stay away from hot showers, sitting or standing in direct sun, and hot drinks
- Do strenuous exercise like riding, jogging or going to the gym.
- Smoke for at least 2 hours
- Drink alcohol for at least six hours

Giving blood often during de-ironing

After a venesection, the body uses Vitamin B12, folate, iron and protein to make new blood. People undergoing frequent venesections (giving blood) during the initial de-ironing phase of treatment may find Vitamin B12 and folate supplements helpful to boost the ability of the body to make new blood cells and cope with the process. You should seek advice from a pharmacist or your GP.

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INFO LINE 1300 019 028

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