

The donors most likely to become iron deficient are:

- **Donors who give more often**
 - Females who give more than one whole blood unit per year
 - Males who give more than two whole blood units per year
 - Six or more platelet donations per year
- **Women before menopause**
- **Young donors** (especially teens)
- **Donors with hemoglobin levels near or below the minimum required for blood donation** (we screen every donor for hemoglobin level)
 - **12.5 for women**
 - **13.0 for men**

If you are a frequent donor or want to be one, or are in one of the groups above, taking an iron supplement is highly encouraged following blood donation.



ImpactLife

BLOODCENTER.ORG

800-747-5401

IRON REPLACEMENT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



ImpactLife

WHY IRON REPLACEMENT

The blood you donate contains iron. Most donors replace the iron lost during donation by using iron already stored in their bodies. If your iron stores are low before you donate, or if you give blood frequently, you may become iron deficient and need to do more to replace the lost iron.

Even before donating blood, low iron is very common in the U.S., and donating blood can add to it. Low hemoglobin happens late in iron deficiency, so you can have iron deficiency with a normal hemoglobin level.

Health problems from low iron levels before the hemoglobin falls are rare.

If you are a frequent donor, or are at risk for having low iron stores, taking an iron supplement is highly recommended.

WHAT CAN I DO

The most reliable way to prevent low iron is to replace the iron removed when you donate using pills. This is much faster and more reliable than trying to do it with a high iron diet.

Taking 18-38 mg of ferrous gluconate daily for eight weeks helps to replace the iron lost in a whole blood donation. It is available over the counter and in multivitamins with iron (read the label). This amount has no more side effects than a sugar pill. Talk to your health care provider before taking any supplements.

The second way to prevent this is by donating less frequently, but that can make maintaining the blood supply more difficult. At its discretion, the blood center may provide iron supplements to certain donors to promote wellness and allow them to continue donating to support the patients who depend on the availability of blood.

**For more information:
[BLOODCENTER.ORG/IRON](https://www.bloodcenter.org/iron)**



ImpactLife

