

African-American Blood Facts to Know and Share



**American
Red Cross**

- There are far more African Americans needing blood than there are African Americans donating blood.
- While African Americans comprise nearly 13 percent of the United States population, they represent less than 1 percent of blood donors.
- You cannot catch infectious diseases, such as AIDS or hepatitis, from donating blood. The needle is sterile and the supplies are used only once and then discarded.
- Neither high blood pressure nor sugar diabetes prevents you from donating blood if they are under control. The Red Cross will check your blood pressure before you donate to make sure it is at a safe level for you to donate.
- Some African Americans have rare blood types that are unique for the African-American community. Your blood type may be someone's only hope for survival.
- More African-American donors are needed to ensure that enough blood is available when needed, especially for patients with sickle cell disease.
- Sickle cell disease affects 70,000 African Americans.
- African Americans with diseases like sickle cell anemia, cancer and leukemia or kidney disease are less likely to have physical reactions to blood donations from other African Americans.
- Learn more about sickle cell disease and how you can get tested at sicklecelldisease.org.



The need is constant. The gratification is instant. Give blood.™