

BLOOD LINE

THE *voluntary* BLOOD DONATION JOURNAL

2017 | 45

Promoting
Voluntary
Blood
Donation



JOIN SCRI IN THE FIGHT AGAINST BLOOD CANCER!

Did you know?

Every 6 minutes, someone in India is diagnosed with blood cancer (e.g. leukemia, lymphoma or myeloma), thalassemia or aplastic anemia. If conventional treatments fail, a blood stem cell transplant from a voluntary donor could give them a second chance at life. In order for the transplant to be successful, the HLA (tissue) type of the donor must match the patient almost perfectly. As there are over 17,000 known HLA types, which are linked closely to ethnicity, the chances of a patient-donor match are very, very rare and much more complex than blood group matching. 70% of patients in need of a transplant do not find a tissue-matching donor within their family and therefore need an unrelated matching donor from a stem cell registry.

The Stem Cell Registry India (S C R I) is an initiative of NGO BMST (Bangalore Medical Services Trust), supported by DKMS, the international non-profit organization dedicated to the fight against blood cancer. The joint aim of the cooperation is to register potential stem cell donors in India. By doing this, SCRI helps patients who are suffering from blood cancer and other blood-related disorders, such as thalassemia and aplastic anemia, and are in need of a matching stem cell donor.

Today, Indian donors are strongly underrepresented in the world wide database of registered potential stem cell donors. Thus, the chance of finding a suitable donor for Indian blood cancer patients is currently very low. This can only be

changed by increasing the number of Indian donors substantially.

Stem cell donation is easy and safe

Stem cells are produced in thousands daily in our bodies, so after the donation, the level of stem cells in our bodies is naturally replenished within 2-3 weeks.

When a voluntary donor is found as a match for a patient, they can only proceed to donation after passing the stringent pre-donation medical assessment. This step ensures the safety of the donor, as well as the patient receiving the stem cells. Of the two methods of donating stem cells, the most common is similar to an extended blood (platelet) donation, conducted on an apheresis machine as an out-patient procedure. The other very rarely requested method is donating stem cells collected from the back side of the hip bone (not the spine). The method of donation requested is dependent on the treating doctor's recommendation.

Register as a potential stem cell donor and save a life one day!

Being identified as a tissue-matching stem cell donor for a patient is very rare. Only a few registrants have the opportunity to save a total stranger suffering from a life-threatening illness. The determination and willingness of a potential stem cell donor to proceed to donation shows true generosity, kindness and compassion. This selfless and noble act can give a terminally ill blood



Ms. Shalini Gambhir
Head - Donor Recruitment & Communications,

Stem Cell Registry India (SCRI)
Bangalore Medical Services Trust (BMST)
Rotary Bangalore - ttk Blood Bank, New
Thippasandra Main Road, HAL III Stage
Bangalore - 560075, Karnataka, India
Email: shalini@bmstindia.org
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cancer patient a second chance at life.

The Stem Cell Registry India (SCRI) conducts donor education and registration events at companies, colleges, associations and residential complexes to actively increase the number of Indian potential stem cell donors. The results of already finding life-saving matches for many patients in need is proof that ethnicity matters and that we, as Indians, have the potential to create a future with more blood cancer survivors!

On behalf of the countless blood cancer patients and their family members, we invite companies / educational institutions / associations to join hands with us in the fight against blood cancer. Contact us to organize a donor registration event amongst your employees / students / members. Your interest to support our efforts will give hope to countless blood cancer patients and their families.

To know more about Stem Cell Registry India (SCRI), visit www.bmstindia.org.in

NATIONAL BLOOD DONATION DAY CELEBRATIONS- INAUGURAL CEREMONY



Mr.K. Muraleedharan,
Member of Legislative Assembly-
Inauguration and Inaugural Address



Dr.C S B Nair,
Consultant (R&D), TERUMO PENPOL-
Presidential Address



Dr. P V Sulochana,
Chief Blood Transfusion Officer,
SCTIMST- Keynote Address



Dr. Joy Varghese,Asst. Professor,
College of Engineering, Trivandrum-
Felicitation



Mr. Aslam A, Engineer (QA),
TERUMO PENPOL-Welcome Speech



Mr.Nandu Venugopal, NSS Volunteer,
College of Engineering, Trivandrum-
Vote of Thanks

TERUMO PENPOL CELEBRATED NATIONAL BLOOD DONATION DAY IN ASSOCIATION WITH COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, TRIVANDRUM

TERUMO PENPOL in association with the NSS Cell, College of Engineering Trivandrum celebrated National Blood Donation Day as a curtain raiser event on 29 September.

Mr. K Muraleedharan, MLA, who was the chief guest, gave an inspirational message to the crowd. Dr. C S B Nair, Consultant (R&D) of TPPL presided over the function. Dr. P V Sulochana said about the shortage of blood, safe blood donation and motivated the Students to donate blood.

TPPL in association with CET had organized a variety of events like Buddy For Life Contest, Cycle rally, Flash Mob, Street Drama, Blood Donation Awareness session at Schools, Sky Lantern Lighting, Blood Donation camp and making Blood Donation Sand Sculpture at beach to mark the function. A variety of contests like Videography Contest, Photography contest, Quiz Contest and Poster Contest were organized for Students.

TERUMO Penpol recognized Cotton Hill Higher Second-

ary School who is the Buddy For Life Contest winner and winners of various other contests.

An idea-pitching contest on Blood Donation, Mime by cotton hill high school on blood donation were also held. The repeat regular donors shared their experiences.

Massive Promotion was done through the Print and Electronic media. As part of the Promotional Campaign a Facebook Page for NBD event was created.

VBD IEC materials in Malayalam were distributed to the General Public at Shopping Complexes, Railway Station and Bus Stand.



DISPLAY OF VBD POSTERS DESIGNED BY COTTON HILL STUDENTS AT VYLOPILLY



INTRODUCTION OF MOBILE APP



TPPL has donated two mobiles to introduce mobile app to identify blood donors for SCTIMST Engineering College and Barton Hill Govt. Engineering College

BUDDY FOR LIFE CONTEST



A Buddy For Life contest was arranged for school students to promote voluntary blood donation. School Students were encouraged to recruit as many voluntary blood donors as possible in this contest. The school who has recruited the most donors from 15 July before September 25 was selected as the winner. Cotton Hill Govt Higher Secondary School emerged as the winner and the Buddy for life contest winner was honored by MLA K Muraledharan.

TERUMO PENPOL AND CET HAS ORGANIZED 2 MINUTES VBD FILM MAKING CONTEST, PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST, QUIZ CONTEST AND POSTER CONTEST TO PROMOTE BLOOD DONATION-WINNERS RECEIVING THE CASH PRIZE AND CERTIFICATES FROM DR.CSB NAIR, CONSULTANT (R&D), TPPL AND MR. K P RAJAGOPALAN , PRESIDENT, FIBDO



IDEA PITCHING CONTEST ORGANIZED BY TERUMO PENPOL AND CET - PARTICIPANTS RECEIVING THE CERTIFICATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL, COTTON HILL HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL



SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAM-AWARENESS SESSION ARRANGED FOR THE CHILDREN OF COTTON HILL HIGH SCHOOL AND HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Terumo Penpol had designed a program to educate students, Faculty and individuals on the importance of blood donations in our communities. Participants learned the basic components of blood and the importance of each. The program taught and guided participants through the recruitment, registration and donation processes associated with a blood drive.

Educational institutions and organizations are the mainstay of our donor groups and account for almost a third of the units of blood that the Blood Banks collect during the year. Even though they may not be aware, student blood donations make an enormous difference in the lives of many people. We are very proud of them. The faculty advisors who promote blood drives through health and science classes, school clubs, or through personal commitment have earned our gratitude and respect. Students who work on the blood drives have the satisfaction of knowing that they have made a real contribution to their community.



FLASH MOB TO PROMOTE BLOOD DONATION

As part of National Blood Donation day celebrations TERUMO PENPOL in association with College of Engineering, Trivandrum organized a flash mob. The flash mob served the purpose by attracting passerby's attention. The Flash Mob event was held to promote blood donation. Voluntary blood donors are needed in countries throughout the world to help maintain a safe and sufficient blood supply. Finding these donors is often a challenge for blood centers. So, we have created unusual awareness campaigns to promote the need for blood donation.



STREET PLAY ON BLOOD DONATION

As part of National Blood Donation Day Celebrations, TERUMO PENPOL in association with CET organized a "Street Play" campaign in Shanghumugham Beach. With the constant swarm of people at Shanghumugham beach, it was chosen as the venue for the blood donation-themed events. The performers entertained crowds of people gathered around to observe. The Plays appealed to the masses as the visual of the performances sticks in the mind. In addition, it's an effective way of communicating to those who may not be able to read the literature explaining the need for blood.



SAND SCULPTURE TO PROMOTE VOLUNTARY BLOOD DONATION

As part of National Blood Donation celebrations the Associates of TERUMO PENPOL in association with CET have made the sand sculpture at Shanghumugham Beach to promote Voluntary Blood Donation message, raise awareness, inspire and motivate others on blood donation.



CYCLE RALLY

TPPL in association with The National Service Scheme (NSS) unit of CET conducted a cycle rally to create an awareness drive with the aim of spreading the message of blood donation to the masses. To underline the message, the students took out a cycle rally from CET to Shanghumugham beach and awareness speeches were delivered at main junctions by the volunteers. The speeches emphasized various health benefits from donating blood including good health, reduced risk of cancer and hemochromatosis. Blood donation also helps in reducing the risk of damage to liver and pancreas. Donating blood could help in improving cardiovascular health and reducing obesity, they said.



MIME ON BLOOD DONATION



As part of National Blood donation day celebrations a mime was created by the Cotton Higher School team at Vylpilly Samskrithi Bhavan to encourage the students to donate blood.

EXPERIENCE SHARING BY REPEAT REGULAR DONORS



Samchandran .C.,
Sr. Executive, TPPL

K P Rajagopalan,
President, Federation of
Blood Donor organization

PRIMACY FOR SAFE BLOOD TRANSFUSION

Focus should be on promoting repeat and regular voluntary blood donors

The incident of a nine-year-old acquiring transfusion-transmitted HIV infection, while under treatment at the Regional Cancer Centre (RCC) here, has once again brought to focus the need to promote "repeat and regular voluntary blood donors" to ensure better transfusion safety.

This is the third reported case of transfusion-transmitted HIV infection in the State.

Earlier cases

In both prior instances too - in 2005 and 2013 - it had been children who acquired the infection from hospitals. Transfusion medicine experts point out that no blood transfusion is 100% safe. Even while observing all mandatory safety precautions before accepting blood from a donor, there is always the risk that the donor is in the window period.

Window period

(The window period is the time window after getting an infection, when the person might have already contracted the infection, but sufficient number of antibodies have not been developed in the blood for laboratory tests to detect it.) "All government blood banks follow the NACO (National AIDS Control Organisation) guidelines and use the Elisa screening test for screening blood donors. This test has a window period of 45 days to two months. Even screening tests with the highest sensitivity such as NAT (Nucleic Acid Amplification Test) can only minimise the risk by reducing the window period to 10-14 days, but cannot eliminate the risk," a blood bank official said.

Kerala State AIDS Control Society (KSACS) officials said they were focusing on blood donors during the period and trying to trace if any of them could have been in the window period when

they donated blood.

They were also investigating if all qualitative screening procedures to be mandatorily followed by blood banks were being adhered to. HIV testing was a complicated business and it would not be an easy process, the officials said.

"Transfusion-transmitted infections are a universal risk, which is why blood transfusions are always better avoided, unless benefits outweigh the risks. This is why we need to promote awareness on repeat, regular voluntary blood donation because such donors are repeatedly tested through the year and the records maintained, ensuring almost total blood safety," a transfusion medicine expert said.

In Kerala, voluntary blood donation constitutes only about 30% of the total blood donated, the rest being replacement donation. Amongst the 30% voluntary blood donation, repeat, regular donors constitute about 8-10%.

Letters to the editor

Thank you Baby.

Number of blood donation by females are increasing in our state and also we have many female repeat donors. So ferritin estimation for females and all repeat donors will help in retaining the donor pool and help to gain the confidence of the donor community.

Dr. Sulochana
HOD/DTM

Hello Baby-san,

It's nice to see the Blood Line Journal, and I am so impressed by the message of Shri. Justice P.Sathasivam, the Governor of Kerala. I wish you continued outstanding success of the voluntary blood donation in India through your activities.

Best regards,

Y. Kimura
Director Audit/Supervisory
Committee member
TERUMO CORPORATION

Dear Baby-san,

Thank you for share the Blood Line Journal and I like to congratulate for the successful World Blood Donors' day ceremony organized by Terumo Penpol.

Best regards,

Hideki ITO
International Busines Dept.
TERUMO CORPORATION

Thank you for these initiatives, they are really well done!
Regards,

Peggy James
Product Support and Training Manager at
Terumo BCT

Dear Baby,

Hearty congratulation to you for your dedication sincerity and commitment to the profession. I am confident you have dedicated your life for transfusion services. God bless you and give you energy to make india tr. Med better than any developed countries of the world.
Warm regards

Dr. Sharad Jain
Govt. Hospital, Jabalpur

Hi Baby-san,

Thank you very much for the article.
With Best Regards,

Masanori Sato
TBCT

Dear Baby P.S.,

Thank you for sending me the latest issue of your Journal. TC newly established the CSR planning group in July. This kind of information is helpful for us.

Many thanks for your kind cooperation.

Regards,

Tomohiro Watanabe,
Manager CSR TERUMO CORPORATION

Greetings of the day!

Thanks for latest Blood Line Journal for sharing the information. Congratulations to all honored personalities and thanks to helping hands to achieve 100% voluntary blood donation.

Blood Donors Association, Nepal

Madam,

Thanks a lot for regularly sending the article on blood donation which is very educative and interesting. Really it is a motivating factor.

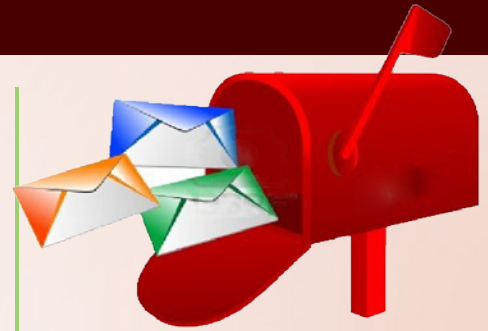
Lt. Col. Simon P.J.
NCC Battalion Commanding Officer

Dear Baby Mam,
Thanks a lot for regularly sending us BLOODLINE. It gives lot of information on the subject of activities and ideas on promotion of VBD. That motivates the person who is not a regular Blood Donor. Keep it up.
Regards

Umalkar
Saral Enterprises, Mumbai

Dear Editor,
I have pleasure in informing you that the IRCS Blood Program of Ahmedabad will be celebrating 1st october 2017 by proclaiming Ahmedabad a city of one hundred centurion blood donors. we will be printing a directory of 100 centurion blood donors with photograph and related information on that occasion.

Mahesh Trivedi
Hon Advisor IRCS, Ahmedabad



Thanks for forwarding the soft copy of the journal "BODY LINE". 14th. June is celebrated as the WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY. The day is the birth day of the legendary person named Karl Landstiner of Austria who discovered the Blood Group (A, B, O) in 1901 and got the noble prize in 1930. He also invented the Rh factor (+ & -) in 1940. The said fact should have been included separately with the photo of the great scientist in the journal for knowing the readers. However, Hon'ble Governor has rightly mentioned the fact in his inaugural address as printed.

Sitangsu Kumar Bhaduri
Kolkatta

Dear Baby,

Wonderful Congratulations on yet another very informative issue. The pictures are very captivating!

Warm regards

Shalini Gambhir
Head - Donor Recruitment &
Communications
Stem Cell Registry India (SCRI)
Bangalore Medical Services Trust (BMST)

Dear Baby

Thank You very much for sending the journal and I appreciate your effort in motivating blood donation.

P.K.Sreekumar
Asst drugs Controller, DC's Office
Thiruvananthapuram.

Nice ...sorry for late reply. It's really good.. Keep promoting blood donation...

Best wishes....

Aneesh Mohanan
NSS Volunteer, CET

DONATING BLOOD MAKES US FEEL LIKE THE RICHEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD

You don't have to have superpowers to be a hero to someone; you could save their life with the benevolent act of donating blood. In fact, one pint or 450 ml of blood can actually save as many as three lives. As the country's hospital authorities and blood banks still grapple with the challenge of stocking up on all blood types, we could definitely use more such heroes who save the lives of pregnant women to trauma patients. On World Blood Donor Day, today, we talk to a few regular voluntary blood donors across the State, who have made a habit of saving lives:

Being a doctor, it's my duty to donate blood: **Dr Mariya Jacob (25), from Kottayam**

I did my graduation at Punjab and during my internships, I used to attend to a lot of trauma patients who did not have any immediate relatives. My blood type is O+ and I have donated blood more than five times to the patients. When you see their smile, it's priceless and you get a lot of satisfaction as a doctor too. Currently, there's a rising requirement for blood, especially for those suffering from viral diseases such as dengue and chikungunya. These patients need blood platelets to combat the disease and sustain life.

I might not be able to help people financially, but I can save them by donating blood: **Rajeevan K (39), Painter from Kozhikode**

I have a rare blood type, O-. I have donated around 25 times - to pregnant women as well as critical patients. I first gave blood to an emergency accident victim. After the donation, I went to see the patient. I was moved when his family thanked me for the deed that saved his life in time. Financially, I am not that stable but that moment when I received the gratitude straight from their hearts, I felt like the wealthiest person in the world. From then on, I donate blood whenever possible. The norm is that people can give blood once every three months. But I took a risk once by donating right after a month. When I saw an ailing patient and his pleading family, I couldn't ignore them and went ahead, neglecting my health. I can't support a needy person financially, but I can donate blood and save life.

A healthy diet is essential to be a donor :**Revathi Ramachandran (34), Techie from Trivandrum**

The blood donation drives at my office spurred me on to become a donor. I was rejected the first time due to dental issues. The second time the needle freaked me out but the blood collection went smoothly. Later, I went to donate blood at Regional Cancer Centre, Trivandrum, and have been a regular donor since then. It is still difficult to find matching donors. Most of the female donors are rejected as they don't have recommended Haemoglobin (Hb) levels to donate blood. So, I now take extra care to follow a healthy diet so that I could donate blood every four months. Women who wish to donate blood must include more green leafy vegetables like drumsticks leaves, spinach, pomegranate, beetroot, jaggery and peanuts in their daily diet maintain the required Hb level. Donating blood also keeps us young. You lose approximately 650 calories when you donate one pint of blood.

Donating blood is the most sacred act you could do: **Baiju Nellimood (48), Businessman from Trivandrum**

I have been a regular donor since 18 and last year, I donated for the 100th time. My first time was 30 years ago. I had only read in books about the different blood types and donation. There were so many misconceptions back then about giving blood to another person - that you would contract diseases etc. I didn't sleep the night I donated blood as I was scared my parents would beat me up if they knew what I had done. But two days later, I took the courage to tell my mother and to my surprise, she patted my shoulder and said she was proud. That motivated me to donate blood till date. I think it's the most sacred gift you could give to a fellow human being as it saves his or her life.

Donating blood motivates others to do the same: **Ashley George (26), Teacher from Kozhikode**

Blood shortage is a perennial issue. I was part of a blood donation camp in college. My blood type is B+ and I always thought with the group being common, there would not be a need to donate blood. But during the camp, I got to

know that every blood group needs donors as there is a shortage of blood in our country. I worked in a rural area in Jammu and Kashmir a few years ago as part of a vocational training project. I was able to make the residents aware of blood donation drives and that too only because I was a donor. So, donating blood also motivates others to do the same. Now I give awareness classes to my students, who are in senior secondary, to donate blood after they turn 18 years old.

4 steps to blood donation:

1. Registration: Verify your name and fill up a donor's form upon arrival at the blood collection site
2. Physical check-up: The medical practitioner will check your temperature, pulse, blood pressure and haemoglobin (Hb) level present in a blood sample
3. Donation: A unit of blood or 450 ml will be collected from your arm with a brand new sterile needle. This takes upto approximately 12 minutes
4. Relaxation: After donation you should have a snack and drink healthy refreshments. Rest for 15 minutes before leaving the site and continue your normal activities. You should also drink more fluids throughout the day.

Giving blood for the first time? Here's what you should know:

Eligibility:

Donor must be between 18 and 60 years old, weighing no less than 50 kg

Health condition:

1. Should not be suffering from communicable diseases, HIV, ailments like cancer, diabetes or tuberculosis, asthma, rabies etc
2. Haemoglobin level: Not be less than 12.5 g/dL
3. Pulse rate: 50-100 without irregularities
4. Blood Pressure: Diastolic BP 50-100 mm Hg, and Systolic BP 100-180 mm Hg
5. Get a good night's sleep
6. Eat a healthy meal before your donation
7. If you are a platelet donor, remember that your system must be free of aspirin for two days prior to blood donation

FACEBOOK UNVEILS 'BLOOD DONOR' FEATURE TO INCREASE BLOOD DONATIONS, HERE'S HOW YOU CAN SIGN UP

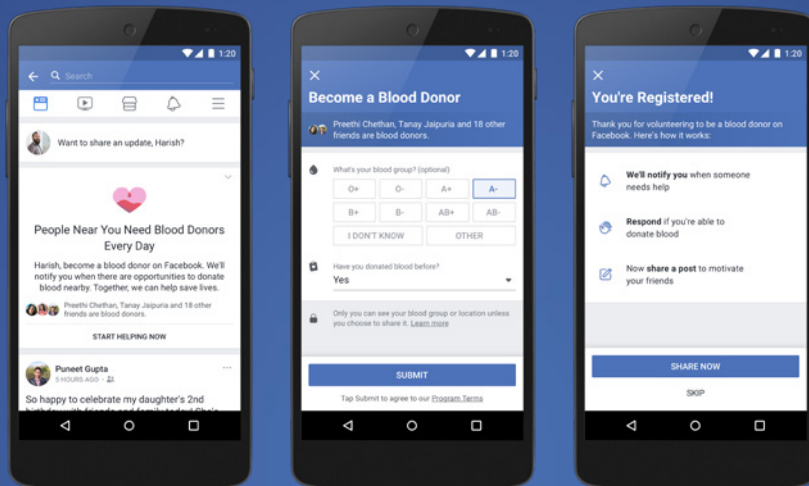
The whole world, including India, has a problem with a shortage of safe blood. There aren't enough people donating blood to cover everyone in need and families are often forced to find donors on their own.

Facebook has noticed this and have decided to take action on their end. Their research suggests that if people are more informed about the issue they are more willing to help. That would also make the job much easier for people who are in need of blood donors.

Facebook CEO, Mark Zuckerberg in a post on his account hailed the initiative which was developed as part of an internal hackathon

Facebook has launched a new feature in India that will connect blood donors and blood banks with those who need help. The new feature on the popular social networking site is the brainchild of the Indian product developer Hema Budaraju.

Facebook CEO, Mark Zuckerberg in a post on his Facebook account hailed the initiative which was developed as part of an internal hackathon. "It can be hard to find a donor or donate to someone outside your network. So we worked with non-profit organisations, blood banks, and donors to build a tool to make it



easier to give blood. Donors can register on Facebook and get a notification if a person or an organization nearby needs blood, and people who need donations can be connected to potential donors."

Launched on 1st October i.e. National Blood Donor Day, the users of Facebook can join the feature after the joining notification appears on their accounts news feed. Once the user clicks it, another page appears inquiring about the user's blood group.

Later, a question appears regarding whether the user had donated blood before. After these questions are an-

swered, the user's joining procedure is complete. The user then gets the option of sharing the status of the joining on the profile of their facebook page. When any requirement of blood emerges in the vicinity, users having the required blood group will get a notification. Donors can then respond through WhatsApp, Messenger or phone calls.

It is not yet clear whether the feature that is available in India will be made available globally. But the site is expected to add 'Blood Donor' registration link soon on facebook profile pages in India.

HIS HANDICAP DID NOT STOP HIM FROM DONATING BLOOD -NIKUN SONI, WHO DIED OF CANCER RECENTLY, HAD DONATED BLOOD 115 TIMES

Soni was a normal child at birth, but an accident left him with just one leg. His brother Dineshbhai said, "When Nikun was 17, an accidental bullet from a policeman's gun pierced his thigh while on his way home from a typewriting class. It was the time of the Navnirman movement."

When Nikun regained consciousness, he found that his one leg had been amputated. Undaunted by his condition, he decided to do something for society after he came to know that complete strangers had donated 60 bottles of blood for him. "We had requested people to donate blood through radio advertisements and word of mouth. When he came to know about the overwhelming response, he decided to do something for society when he came out of hospi-

tal," Dineshbhai said. Since then, Nikun has not missed a single opportunity to donate blood. He used to work as a machine operator in CTM area.

Having won several awards for blood donation, Soni was always ready to those in need of blood. His sister-in-law Pannaben said, "It happened many a time that he would rush to someone's help leaving everything behind. We would come to know of it later. His handicap did not come in the way of his generosity. He travelled often, even to other states like Orissa, for blood donation awareness camps."

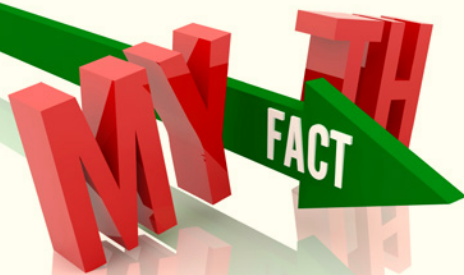
When Soni donated blood for the 100th time, the family got together and conducted pooja at home. Says his niece Jalpa, 26, "We were all very happy after Nikun uncle had donated blood 100

times. We were also planning to arrange something similar when he would achieve his dream target of 125 blood donations as he feared after that he would be considered old to donate for his cause. He never had any regrets, but this one thing remained in his heart till he died."

Detected with cancer eight months ago, before his death in March, Nikun had to stop donating blood. Dineshbhai said, "A few days before his death on March 14, the Gujarat State Council for Blood Transfusion had asked him to be their ambassador and motivate people to donate, but that was not to be."

Till he could donate blood, Nikun did not miss a chance. As per his wishes, his eyes too were donated after his death.

Source: Times of India Newspaper



DO YOU STOP YOURSELF FROM DONATING BLOOD? DEBUNKING TOP 6 MYTHS ABOUT BLOOD DONATION

A majority of us have been believing stories about the effects and results of blood donation that science completely discredits. We debunk 6 popular myths that prevent people from performing the good deed of blood donation.

Don't stop yourself from donating blood today

Do you stop yourself from going to the blood camp to donate blood? Well, most likely, the reason that prevented you from going is not true. A majority of us have been believing stories about the effects and results of blood donation that science completely discredits. This World Blood Donor Day, which is celebrated every 14th of June, go out and donate blood. The theme for the 2017 campaign is: What can you do?, with the secondary message: Give blood. Give now. Give often. The campaign underlines the role every single person can play in helping others in emergency situations, by giving the valuable gift of blood. It also focuses on the fact that it is important to give blood regularly, so that the blood stock is sufficient before an emergency arises.

Here, we have 6 popular myths that prevent people from performing the good deed of blood donation.

Myth 1: Our bodies have limited blood and it is unhealthy to give some away.

Wrong. Blood cells are created in the soft fatty tissue inside bone cavities, called bone marrow. The stem cells inside our bone marrow divide to create the different components of blood. These cells are continuously created since they also die within a short span of a few hours to 120 days. When you donate blood, your body, particularly the peritubular cells in the kidneys detect a shortage in the red blood cells. They signal the cells

in the bone marrow by the secretion of erythropoietin, to create additional RBCs. So, blood donation is perfectly normal and does not make you unhealthy.

Myth 2: Vegetarians are not suited for blood donation as they have less iron in their bodies.

Not true. This misconception originates because of the fact that typically, meat-based foods are considered to be good sources of iron. Iron is responsible for haemoglobin production in the body, a protein essential for blood donation. However, vegetarians are perfectly capable of donating blood. A lot of foods in our Indian diet like spinach, raisins, rajma, chickpeas and apricot are rich sources of iron. It was formally stated in a research study published in the Asian Journal of Transfusion science that a vegetarian or non vegetarian diet is not a determinant of your eligibility of blood donation.

Myth 3: Blood donation hurts.

False again. The process of blood donation is very simple and takes only less than 30 minutes. To take your blood, the nurses will simply inject a small needle in your arm and nothing else is required to be done. You will only feel a small prick during the process and the feeling gets elevated as soon as the transfer ends.

Myth 4: Women can't donate blood.

Not true at all. To be an eligible blood donor, you have to get your haemoglobin level tested. Haemoglobin is a protein of the red blood cells that gives our blood its red colour and also carries oxygen throughout the body. Inadequate levels of this protein will mean that you can't donate blood. While men typically have higher levels of haemoglobin than women,

it is not true that women can't reach the required level. Only women who are anemic, pregnant, lactating or those who have a medical problem that prevents adequate haemoglobin production are not eligible donors. Despite this, only 4% of all blood donors in India are women.

Myth 5: Thin people are ineligible donors and heavy people have more blood to give.

Wrong. While it is essential that you have a minimum weight of 50 kgs to donate blood, your body size is not a determinant of your eligibility. More often, it is the heavy people who might be ineligible if they are suffering from diabetes or a heart disease. Furthermore, blood creation is more only in situations where your body needs it infections or bleeding, not if you are overweight.

Myth 6 Taking medication means that one cannot be a blood donor.

False. In a majority of the cases, taking medication does not disqualify you as a blood donor. The effects of your medication to your body will be evaluated to see whether it poses any harm to the blood donation. People who have taken birth controls and general antibiotics are acceptable to donate. Those who have been vaccinated are also allowed, except when the immunization was for chicken pox, measles, polio or hepatitis B, in which case you will be required to wait for 4-20 weeks.

Now, with these common misconceptions out of your way, you can help save lives by donating blood and filling up the blood shortage in India.

Source:NDTV