

# Blood Line

The Voluntary Blood Donation Journal

Promoting  
Voluntary  
Blood Donation

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TRIVANDRUM

Voluntary Blood Donation has unmatched importance in the field of modern medicine. Blood transfusion, be that of whole blood or components form a crucial and irreplaceable part in the medical management of many vital diseases. The importance of blood safety and its availability goes hand in hand and invariably points to the paramount significance of voluntary blood donation.

The incidence of transfusion transmitted diseases, as we all know are negligible among voluntary blood donors. Hence the practice when promoted turns out to be safest way of blood transfusion. Among them, the proportion of female donors tends to be at a lower level than the male counterpart as low as 1:50. Though the fraction improves with outreach camps to 1:5.

After the normal working day in the blood collection centre it turns out that the female enthusiasm and willingness for blood donation is much high when compared to male donors. Unfortunately not all of their consents can be put to

## VOLUNTARY BLOOD DONATION IN FEMALES

use, because of the following factors and many more. These include Medical, Socio economical, educational, cultural and the degree of awareness.

The Medical factors which prevent a female from donating blood include menstruation, pregnancy, lactation and perimenopausal health problems. Nutritional anemia showing a higher incidence among females also proves to be a reason for donor deferral among the female category.

The socio economic background of an average Indian female still poses to be another major barrier.

Among many middle class Indian families, female nutrition lags behind. This reflects as the major problem of nutritional anemia emerging with high predominance in females. Being mostly confined to housework, women find it rather difficult to access such facilities of blood donation services. On the other hand, even working women too are not at ease owing to their busy schedule lodged in between their houses and work places. Lack of good family support adds to the inaccessibility of females for blood donation.

The educational status invariably contributes to the urge for donation. Poor educational back ground and literacy levels among females added to the male predominance prevailing in the society does not help matters either.

Different communities from cultural strata of the society have varying attitudes towards donating blood. Many orthodox communities have their traditional customs and beliefs which

prevents them coming forth. Lot of misconceptions and superstitions prevail among them equally affecting both sexes.

### What to do?

The medical issues principally arising from problems pertaining to menstruation and pregnancy related conditions can only be met with by effective utilization of suitable time spans.

Hemoglobin levels in cases of nutritional anemia can be raised by improving their food habits. Family support plays an important role in attaining this goal.

Considering the difficulty to access, outreach blood donation camps can be arranged. These are of special importance as they cover this spectrum of both working women and those of the household. Such camps can be arranged with the help of organizations such as resident's associations for household women and at offices and other Institutions for working women. The service of mobile blood collection vans can also be utilized for the above purposes. This can also reach out to the rural women population.

Health education, speeches on awareness regarding the importance and safety of voluntary blood donation helps to clear many misconceptions regarding the subjects. Good family support will definitely offer more opportunities for female blood donors. Improving the educational status and acquiring self sufficiency in life will substantiate the voluntary blood donation movement.

# World Blood Donor Day Inaugural Ceremony

## Arun Gokuldas –The Best Blood Donor Sharing His Experience



Mr. K B Ganesh Kumar, Minister for Forest, Sports and Cinema



Mr. Yoshihiro Kimura, Chairman, TERUMO PENPOL Limited



In the year 1960 I got a scholarship from the Rotary International to go to Australia for a year's study. I lived with Australian families. I was surprised to note most of my hosts were blood donors. I volunteered but was turned down because I was only 15yrs old. After my return to India, I decided to donate blood from my 18th birthday. By GOD'S GRACE I have NOT looked back, I am now 67yrs old. You may wonder how the blood bank is accepting my blood, well again by God's grace my hb. is 14+ & bp is 130/70. The good lord has been very kind to me because I HAVE NEVER BEEN DEFERRED.

When I go to the blood bank I forget to reveal my age because I don't want the Blood Bank in charge to get into trouble. I hail from a family of blood donors. My 2 elder brothers were blood donors, my wife daughters & sons-in-law are also blood donors so I am from a BLOOD FAMILY. I have attended 2 International Blood Donor Conferences. I have attended several National Conferences. Recipient of a Gold Medal from the Indian Red Cross Society Coimbatore, best delegate & medal from Indian Society of Blood Transfusion & Immunhaemot-ology. I am also the patron member of Karunya Blood Donor's Association. **"My motto in life is as life is to live blood is to give"**. So live & let live. Nowadays i donate blood only once a year & that if it is an emergency. I can be of any service to the bold blood movement.



Mr. C Padmakumar, Executive Director TERUMO PENPOL Limited



Dr. Anitha Sankar, Liaison officer State NSS Cell

## World Blood Donor Day Celebration organized by TERUMO PENPOL Limited, State NSS Cell and CII



TERUMO PENPOL Limited in association with State NSS Cell and Confederation of Indian Industry celebrated the World Blood Donor Day as a major event on 14 June 2011 at Vylopilly Samskrithi Bhavan, Nanthancode, Trivandrum .

Hon. Minister for Forest, Sports and Cinema Mr.K B Ganesh Kumar inaugurated World Blood Donor Day Function.

Mr.C Padmakumar the Executive Director of TERUMO PENPOL and the



Chairman of CII (TVM Zone) made a presentation on Voluntary Blood Donation.

Dr.Anitha Sankar the State NSS Liaison Officer welcomed the gathering.

TERUMO PENPOL also rewarded the Best Blood Donors who had donated blood 4 times in 2010 and 250 repeat regular donors who had donated blood 3 times in 2010 .The Blood Donor Motivators, Best Club 25 Coordinators and NSS Program officers promoting voluntary blood donation were also felicitated

## HUSBAND AND WIFE WON THE BEST BLOOD DONORS AWARD



Hashim P and his wife Mafeeda Hashim are Employees of TERMO PENPOL Limited.

Hashim P and his wife Mafeeda Hashim regularly donate blood at RCC. Hashim started to give blood regularly after he joined PENPOL. To quote his words " When I joined PENPOL I made a conscious effort to give support to the needy patients. I felt it was the least I could do. Giving blood just seemed like the right thing to do".

Hashim's wife Mafeeda also donated blood after joining TERUMO PENPOL. She said "Giving blood costs a little bit of my time but that is relatively unimportant considering what blood means to the people who need it. It is an easy way for me to make a difference and it is one way for all of us to say who we are as a community".



# WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY CELEBRATION AT IMA BLOOD BANK, ALUVA



The World Blood Donor's Day was observed under the auspices of the Regional Blood Transfusion Centre, District Hospital, Aluva in cooperation with IMA Madhya Kerala, Kerala State Aids Control Society HLPPT and NSS Unit, St. Xavier's College.

A Blood Donation Camp preceded by awareness class was organized. Poster session on blood donation, HIV/AIDS were organized at St.Xavier's College for Women, Aluva wherein 60 girls donated blood.

Mr. Anwar Sadat M.L.A. inaugurated a very well attended public meeting including people from all walks of life at the St. Xavier's College Auditorium. Mr. Jacob, Municipal Chairman & Chairman of Blood Bank Managing Committee presided over the function. The M.L.A. Mr. Anwar Sadat presented mementoes and certificates of appreciation to five many time donors. The M.L.A. Mr. Anwar Sadat presented mementoes and certificates of appreciation to ten many time donors. Dr.Zulaiha Muhammed, Dr.N.Vijayakumar, Smt. Beena K.R., Anoop Paul, Frajil Francis M were also honoured for their contribution to the organization of voluntary blood donation camps. Prof. Dr. Seema, NSS Programme Coordinator welcomed the gathering. District Medical Officer, Dr.Sudhakaran inaugurated the blood donation camp and gave the World Blood Donors' Day day's message. Dr.K.V. Beena District Programme Manager, N.R.H.M. delivered the key note address. The Principal Rev. Sr. Percy, Secretary IMA Madhya Kerala Dr. Rafeeq ,Chairman, Health Standing Committee Mr.M.PSimon joined the other councilors in offering felicitations. Dr.Subaida N.V, Medical Superintendent proposed the vote of thanks. An awareness class by the Blood Bank Medical Officer Dr.N.Vijaya Kumar and a good interactive session followed the inaugural function.

## Best Blood Donor Motivators Receiving the Award from Mr.K B Ganesh Kumar, Minister For Forest, Sports and Cinema



Mr. K P Rajagopalan  
General Secretary, KEBS

Mr.Byju S Mony  
District Secretary, KEBS

Dr. Indira  
Medical Officer,  
VSSC

Dr. Shinelal  
Neyyattinkara Mekhala  
Committee. KEBS

Ms. Celin Joseph  
Secretary, Sanjo Welfare  
Centre,Alwaye

Mr. R. Anil Kumar  
Sr. Technician, BBF



Ms. Aprana Lakshmanan  
NSS Program Officer  
St Xavier's College  
For Women, Aluva

Sri. Rajan Malayil  
NSS Program Officer  
Zamorins  
Guruvayoorappan  
College, Calicut

Sri. V. Ravi  
NSS Program  
Officer, Govt.  
College, Chittur

Dr. Sulekha  
NSS Program Officer  
S.N. College for  
Women, Kollam

Prof. T.C. Titus  
NSS Program Officer  
B.J.M. Govt. College  
Chavara

Mary Mettilda  
Club 25 Coordinator  
All Saint's College  
Trivandrum

Dr. Sunil M.S.  
Club 25 Coordinator  
Catholicate College  
Pathanamthitta

## The winners of Thank you Blood Donor Greeting Card Design Contest receiving the award from Mr. Yoshihiro Kimura,Chairman,TERUMO PENPOL



Sruthi Gopakumar  
First Prize Winner



G S Gokul Gopan  
Consolation Prize Winner

As part of World Blood Donor Day Celebration TERUMO PENPOL Limited organized a "Thank You Blood Donor Greeting Card Design Contest" for College Students, High School and Higher Secondary Students .

The Thank You Blood Donor Greeting Card Contest was organized to thank those unsung heroes who voluntarily donated their blood without any reward, except the knowledge that they have helped to save lives, particularly those who give blood on a regular basis two, three or more times each year.

# Letters to the Editor



Dear Ms. Baby P. S,

Subject : Invitation to Join as a Partner in Celebrations of World Blood Donor Day

At the very outset, let me congratulate you for the efforts being made by you & your team in promoting voluntary blood donation. I have been going through all the issues of "Blood Line" Journal and found all of those very informative & meaningful.

We are planning to celebrate World Blood Donor Day in a big way and are inviting Presidents and Secretaries of all State Chapters of ISBTI along with other senior professionals in the fields of blood transfusion services and voluntary blood donation.

We would like you also to be a part of this celebration and partner with us in all the promotional programs planned to be carried out on this occasion.

We will send you the details of activities & schedule as and when these are finalized and look forward for your confirmation in this regard.

You might be aware that ISBTI is organizing its 36<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference "TRANSCON 2011" from 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 to 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2011 at Panchkula (Haryana) as per the details given on the website: [www.transcon2011.com](http://www.transcon2011.com) Keeping in view, your vast experience in the field, I request you to suggest Conference Topics on 'Voluntary Blood Donation' to make this event more useful & meaningful for the participants.

Your suggestions would be added to the current list which is given in the following PDF document:

<http://www.transcon2011.com/downloads/files/n4db2f1742dbcc.pdf>

Please also suggest names of some good speakers who can deliver their presentation on voluntary blood donation during the conference.

Looking for your early response.

Once again, I extend my heartiest congratulations and Wish You All the Best for all of your endeavors.

Warm regards

Dr. Yudhbir Singh, IAS  
President, ISBTI - National  
Deputy Commissioner Residence,  
Sirsa - 125055, Haryana, INDIA  
**Mob. 09416036039**

Dear Baby,

Ever so many thanks for the coverage given to our efforts at voluntary blood donation. All of us at Aluva deeply appreciate and greatly value the same and do hope to enjoy your continued patronage in the days to come.

Trust this finds Urself family and colleagues in fine fettle.

Yours sincerely

Dr.N.Vijayakumar  
Blood Bank Officer  
Regional Blood Transfusion Center

Dear Baby,

A good effort on your part. This journal needs further informative text for motivation. South India has more voluntary donation. Donors achievement and experience should be highlighted.

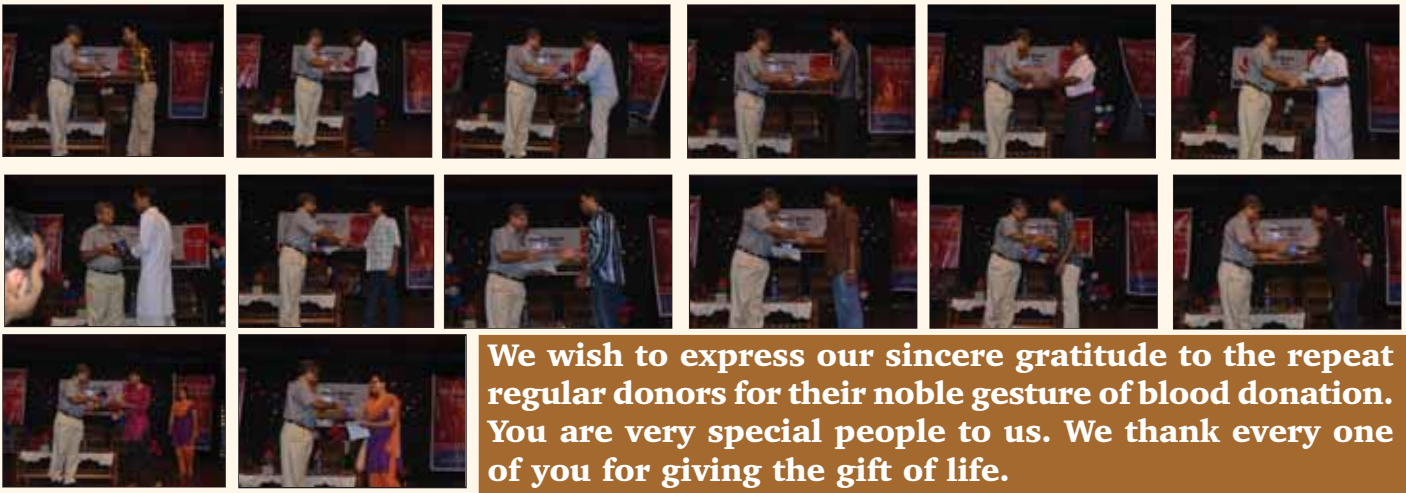
Dr Tulika Chandra  
I/c State of Art Model Blood Bank  
CSMMU, Lucknow



**LIFE SAVERS-The repeat regular donors receiving the award from Mr.C Padmakumar, Executive Director, TERUMO PENPOL Limited and Chairman, CII, TVM Chapter**







**We wish to express our sincere gratitude to the repeat regular donors for their noble gesture of blood donation. You are very special people to us. We thank every one of you for giving the gift of life.**

## Blood will tell

### Nucleic Acid Testing Adds Safety To Blood Transfusions

**By Dr Anand Deshpande ,Consultant,Transfusion Medicine and Haematology,P.D Hinduja National Hospital,Mumbai  
Written in the The Week,Health,June 26, 2011**

**A**n essential life saving system in modern health care is blood transfusion. Issuing uncontaminated blood is the top priority for transfusion centers. For this several tests are carried out. The US Food and Drug Administration has prescribed five mandatory tests for the donated blood units: HBsAg, HIVAb, HCV Ab, VDRL and malarial parasites.

Current blood screening methods in India are based on the principle of enzyme immunoassay (EIA).These detect the virus –induced antibodies or antigens and not the virus itself. The main problem is that the body takes time to produce the optimum amount of antibodies which can be detected. The period from the time one is infected to the time when enough antibodies are produced for detection is called sero conversion window or window period. In the case of some infections such as HCV(Hepatitis C Virus),it could be as high as 60 days.

Over two billion people around the World are infected with HBV (Hepatitis B Virus) ,the leading cause of liver disease. Countries like India with a high prevalence of HBV have a higher risk of transfusion transmitted HBV. In addition, 170 million people worldwide are infected with HCV and 40 million

with HIV. This makes blood transfusion a serious global concern.

The greatest threat is the donation by infected donors during the window period –when they are initially infected and it is not detected and they unwittingly donate blood. Window period samples have low viral load, which can be detected only through highly sensitive assays.

Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing (NAT) is a highly sensitive and specific test that detects very low levels of viral RNA or DNA that may be present in donated blood, before the body starts producing antibodies in response to the virus. NAT shortens the window period considerably. For detection of HIV, the window period is reduced from 20.3 days to 5.6. For HCV, it is reduced from 58.3 days to 4.9, while for HBV, it is down from 53.3 days to 35.4.

NAT is being utilized in Australia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia , New Zealand ,Singapore, Thailand, Japan, Europe ,the Middle East ,Africa, France, Germany. Israel, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, the UK, the US, Brazil, the Caribbean, Canada and a host of other nations.

Nat is used in addition to the antibody test, since in some individuals the amount of virus may have fallen below,

detectable limits while the antibodies could still be detectable.

The potential for Nat yield in India is staggering, given the prevalence of the viruses in the population.5.7 million with HIV,12 millions with HCV, and 40 millions with HBV (10 percent of the World's HBV - infected population), when compared to other countries that have already implemented the technology India has a high percentage of replacement blood donors who are associated with higher infection rates compared to voluntary donors.

Before 1985,donors were screened for only syphilis and hepatitis B Virus. Now , a series of measures ,including the latest viral nucleic acid detection, are being introduced into the screening of blood donation in order to reduce the risk of blood –borne viruses.

Given high prevalence of HIV,HBV and HCV in India and keeping in mind the high percentage of first time donors and replacement donors ,it is likely that adding NAT to the current screening test will make donated blood safe.

The idea is to provide safe and high quality blood and blood components to all patients requiring transfusion. Implementation of NAT screening of all blood donations is another step towards ensuring safe and effective transfusions.

# The crimson elixir of life

Balan Kumar's zeal for a very noble cause has won him recognition and awards, and when he got married five years ago, he found a novel way of spreading the message. Balan Kumar or Blood Kumar, as he is popularly known, has been regularly donating blood for more than two decades and believes passionately that more people should donate blood. So, when he got married in June 2006, he asked guests attending his marriage for a specific and unique wedding gift - donating their blood!

"The wedding card said 'Please grace the wedding reception with the gift of blood', because I wanted people to be aware about the importance of donating blood," said Mr Kumar. Equally unusual was the décor of the marriage reception. "It looked like a standby hospital, complete with a bed and equipment and even the presence of medical professionals." Some 55 of the guests, led by the groom and bride themselves, donated blood. It was his 81st time and his wife's first.

"It is difficult to convince first time donors and with great difficulty I managed to explain

to my wife that it has no disadvantages, and that rather she will only help so many needy people by donating something that will cost her nothing," says Mr Kumar. Mr Kumar, now 46, was 16 when he first attempted to donate blood. "It was in the year 1981. I was walking back home and saw the Venus Circus fire tragedy unfold right in front of my eyes. It was a Saturday so lots of children had come to watch the circus and perished in the tragedy. I tried hard to get into the premises and help them, but they would not let us in," recalls Mr Kumar.

The vivid images of people crying for help was still fresh in the young man's mind so the next morning he went to the government hospital where the injured were admitted. "I heard they were in need of a lot of blood so I volunteered to donate, but I was only 16 so they would not take it from me as one is entitled to donate blood only after one attains the age of 18." He could not donate, but his interest had been aroused and he met doctors and learnt everything he could about blood donation.

As soon as he turned 18, he began regularly donating blood. He has donated blood 128 times and won the Kempegowda award and the Rajyotsava award as well as gold medals from governors of states for his dedication to the cause. Mr Kumar now has a database of 12,000 donors who can be contacted any time if there is need for blood of any type. In 2003 he set up the Indian Council for Voluntary Blood Donors and with the support of like-minded people across the country he has now an established network throughout the country.

"I just want to ensure that people do not die because of lack of blood," says this crusader, who wants every Bengalurean to realise the importance of donating blood. That explains why he addresses college students and executives at corporate office before organizing blood donation camps. "It is not important to just donate, but it is essential to realize the importance of donating blood because it is a noble act and by doing so one helps in saving so many lives," says Mr Kumar.

Source  
Deccan Chronicle 20 June 2011

## Thanks to BIG FM RADIO

## BIG FM RADIO's Gesture



We sincerely thank Kiddilom Firoz and Ancy of Big FM for arranging a stage show to promote Voluntary Blood Donation on World Blood Donor Day. As part of World Blood Donor Day celebrations Big FM RADIO has continuously aired Blood Donation Promotional messages

Kidilliom Firoz of BIG FM presenting a gift to the Best Blood Donor, Mr. Arun Gokuldas during World Blood Donor Day celebrations at Vyloppilly Samskrithi Bhavan, Nanthencode, Trivandrum

## World Blood Donor Day Celebration organized by State Council For Education Research and Training (SCERT)







SCERT organized World Blood Donor Day celebrations at DIET Kottarkara on 14 June.

Dr.Meena P K, Research officer of SCERT inaugurated the function. Dr Janardhanan Kurup, Principal of DIET presided over the function. P Babu Kuttan the Convener and Teacher of Diet welcomed the gathering. Mr.Hakeem and Mr.Muraledharan teachers of Diet felicitated the function.



Dr. K Mohandas, the Project Officer of CCAE and NSS Program Coordinator, Kerala University took a session on “Voluntary Blood Donation”. Dr.K Mohandas is a repeat regular blood donor who has donated blood 77 times.

Mr. Renjit the Teacher from Anchal Higher Secondary School and a repeat regular Donor also motivated the participants to donate blood regularly.

**LIFE SAVERS-The repeat regular donors receiving the award from Mr. Arun Gokuldas, Liaison Officer, IMA Blood Bank Coimbatore**

