

For information or advice please
contact the donor helpline on **650637**,
Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm



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Isle of Man Blood Transfusion Service
Pathology Department
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Telephone: 01624 650637
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www.gov.im/dhsc

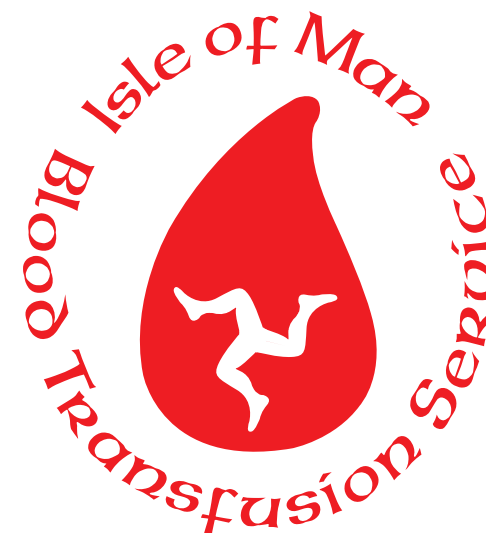
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Feeling Faint

Information for Donors



Feeling Faint

Some donors feel faint after giving blood. This may be due to anxiety, dehydration or loss of blood volume. During donation 8-10% of your blood volume is removed. Most people adapt quickly to this loss, but a few individuals may feel weak, lightheaded or faint during or after their donation.

Reduce the risk of fainting

Before giving blood it is important to:

- Get a good night's sleep
- Drink plenty of non alcoholic fluids in the 24 hours before donating, especially in warm weather
- Drink 500ml of water 20-30 minutes before donating
- Eat regular meals and a snack before donating
- Tell us if you feel dizzy or lightheaded when you stand up suddenly
- Feeling nervous is normal, let us know if you are very anxious so that we can help before you donate
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing and avoid tight sleeves
- Bring a friend, a book or music player to help distract from nervousness

Exercises are important to help raise blood pressure and reduce the risk of fainting – new donors or those who have experienced feeling weak, lightheaded or faint will be advised to:

- Cross and uncross your legs or
- tense your leg and buttock muscles tightly for 5 seconds, then gradually release the hold for 10 seconds
- Repeat these exercises during and after your donation

After giving blood:

- Do not stand up quickly – new donors or those at risk of feeling lightheaded or faint will be escorted to the refreshment area.
- Have light refreshments and stay in the refreshment area for at least 15 minutes after donation
- Drink plenty of non alcoholic fluid-avoid alcohol for at least 6 hours
- Do not smoke for at least 1 hour
- Avoid standing for long periods, in particular crowded places or long queues
- Avoid strenuous exercise until the following day e.g. going to the gym, running or swimming
- Do not use a sauna or steam room on the day of donation
- Avoid any activity which may present a hazard to yourself or others should you feel lightheaded or faint

If you feel faint after leaving the session:

- Lie down straight away to avoid falling and hurting yourself and raise your feet
- Sit and bend forward with your head between your knees until the feeling passes
- Cross and uncross your legs or
- tense your leg and buttock muscles tightly for 5 seconds, then gradually release the hold for 10 seconds
- Repeat these exercises until you feel better
- Get up slowly but if you still feel faint, lie down again
- Have a cold, non alcoholic drink when you feel well enough
- Do not drive for at least 6 hours after you have recovered. There may be risk that you could feel faint again
- If you feel faint while driving – slow down and stop when safe to do so. Stay in the car and lie as flat as possible. Do not attempt to drive again – call 999 for an ambulance
- If you faint or lose consciousness after donating, please contact us as soon as possible for advice about future donations