

## ***Blood Facts***

### ***Who We Are***

Long Island Blood Services (LIBS) is a division of New York Blood Center, the nation's largest community-based non-profit blood collection and distribution organization. LIBS has been providing life-saving blood products and services to 50 hospitals throughout Nassau, Suffolk and Queens for close to 40 years. **LIBS is not affiliated with the American Red Cross.**

### ***What We Do***

Long Island Blood Services is not a blood bank: we are the pipeline to 50 Long Island hospitals. We collect, process and distribute blood to our neighborhood health care institutions that take care of our families, friends and neighbors.

### ***Challenges to Our Blood Supply***

Our region suffers from a shortage of local blood donors, and less than ideal donor frequency (those who donate don't do so often enough). Only 2% of our population donates blood each year, compared to the national average of 5%. Long Island Blood Services is forced to import 25% of our blood products from other blood centers in the United States, because we can't independently meet the demand.

### ***Why We Need Donors***

Blood is perishable and has a very short shelf life of only 42 days. Platelets, a component of blood needed for clotting (often needed by cancer patients), last only for five days. There is no substitute for human blood.

Long Island **hospitals require almost 800 pints of blood per day** just to meet routine needs. Unpredictable disasters require even more. With just a single donation, a person can help several people (up to four) once blood is processed and broken down into its components (red blood cells, plasma, platelets). One in three people will need a blood product sometime during his/her lifetime.

### ***Medical Safety***

Blood is safer than it's ever been. LIBS performs 13 tests on donated blood, including tests for HIV, Hepatitis, Syphilis and now, West Nile Virus. All materials used to collect blood are new (never used), sterile and disposable, and are used only once. And, there's an added benefit to donors: each donor receives a free, mini-physical exam prior to donating to make sure it's safe for them and for the patients who will receive their blood.

### ***Donor Eligibility Requirements***

Donors must be age 16-75, 16 year olds with parental permission, 76+ accepted with a doctor's note, weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and be in general good health. It is safe to donate whole blood every 56 days (up to six times per year). Platelets can be donated every 3 days (up to 24 times per year), and plasma every 28 days. At the time of donation, donors must have either photo or signed identification and know their social security number.

***Remember... Blood is Life, Pass It On!***