

### What are blood products used for?

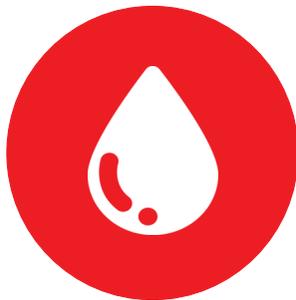
Blood and blood products are a valuable resource for treating some critically ill dogs and cats. They are particularly valuable for treating such conditions as:

-  Acute blood loss from road trauma
-  Blood loss from clotting disorders
-  Anticoagulant rat bait poison
-  Pancreatic disease
-  Blood loss during major surgery

Blood products can also be used to reduce the risk of haemorrhage during surgery in patients with known bleeding disorders and as supportive treatment for some severe debilitating conditions such as endotoxic shock.

In most cases the use of blood products can mean the difference between survival and death so they need to be readily available for use at very short notice. Unfortunately finding a suitable donor in time to give blood for an emergency transfusion is often difficult so blood is collected and 'banked' for future use.

## Blood Donation Programme



Please consider enrolling your dog or cat in our Blood Donor programme.  
You never know when they may need this precious gift.

ALL THE CARE YOUR PET NEEDS!



### Why are blood products useful?

As well as replacing lost red blood cells, vital for carrying oxygen around the body, blood products help in other ways. They also can:

-  Help restore blood volume enabling normal heart function
-  Supply white blood cells that help fight infection
-  Add platelets which are required for normal blood coagulation
-  Supply vital blood proteins which have immune effects, assist with blood coagulation and help maintain blood pressure.

### Why do we need to collect blood regularly?

Unlike most other drugs, blood products are 'biological medications'. This means that they have a limited shelf life. Fresh whole blood will last 31 days. After that it starts to deteriorate and becomes unsuitable for use. Whole blood can also be processed after collection to make a number of other products. Packed red cells have some of the plasma removed and are used mainly in anaemic patients. Plasma, either fresh, or frozen and stored, can be used to treat conditions such as burns, pancreatitis and toxic shock.

Because it has such a short shelf life and must be refrigerated, blood must be collected regularly to ensure it is always available when required.

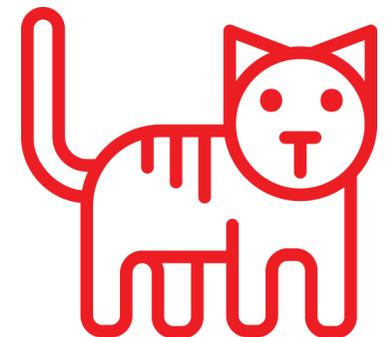
### What is involved in collecting blood?

New donors are screened for suitability and checked for any health problems. A small blood sample is collected and sent to the laboratory for blood typing and to screen for abnormalities. Once enrolled they can be called upon to donate.

After admission the Donor is checked to ensure they are in good health. During the collection process most will receive a mild sedative to help them relax and lie calmly on their side. A small area of hair is clipped from the neck and the collection needle inserted into the jugular vein. Dog blood is collected into a standard blood collection bag. Cat blood is collected into a syringe and mixed with anticoagulants to prevent it clotting before it is used.

During collection donors receive an intravenous drip to help replace the lost blood volume. This is necessary because we collect a larger proportion of total blood volume than is collected from human donors. Healthy donors will replace the lost blood cells over the following 2 – 3 weeks.

The whole process takes approximately 10 -15 minutes and the sedative wears off rapidly over the following few hours. Most donors can safely give 2 or 3 donations a year.



## Can my pet donate blood?

Suitable blood donors should be:

-  Fully grown dogs over 28kg or cats over 4.0kg. Smaller dogs and cats do not have sufficient blood volume to be suitable donors.
-  An ideal body weight. Overweight pets can be difficult to collect and their veins can become damaged as a result.
-  Under 8 years old. Older pets cannot replenish blood cells quickly and may suffer unwanted after-effects
-  Current with vaccinations. Unvaccinated pets may transfer viral diseases to recipients.
-  Cats must be Feline Aids Virus negative.
-  In good health and do not take any long-term medication.

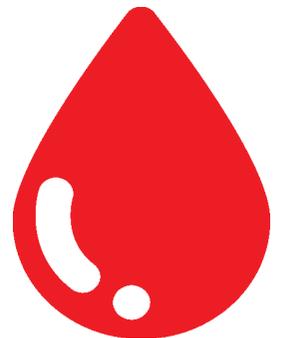
## When do we collect blood?

We normally schedule canine blood collection when our stocks are low so rarely need to call on donors at short notice. However, cat blood is difficult to store, so it is usually collected and used on the same day so emergency collections are often necessary.

We prefer donors to be available during week days. We schedule blood collection on week days and try to give plenty of notice to prospective donors.

Donors, both canine and feline, should be friendly and relaxed when handled by strangers. Nervous donors require heavier sedatives which can make collection more difficult and increase the risk of damage to their jugular vein.

And yes we do reward our donors (and their owners) with a special treat every time they give us some of their precious blood.



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#### CONTACT DETAILS

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#### OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday 8.00 am – 7.30 pm

Saturday 9.00 am – 6.00 pm

Sunday 9.30 am – 5.00 pm

Public Holidays 9.30 am – 5.00 pm

Christmas Day & Good Friday Closed

We would love to hear from you if you have a suitable pet and would like help

Give the gift of life to other sick pets

Talk to our Client Services staff or our Blood Donation Coordinator

Phone +96 4 5698830

Email [nurses@petvet.net.nz](mailto:nurses@petvet.net.nz)

