



EVEN LIFE GIVERS NEED SUPPORT!

Before they can save lives, we need to protect theirs.



#WellnessWithSANBS

South African Blood Donors between 16 and 45, urged to Iron up

Johannesburg, 28 June 2024 – In the realm of healthcare, few acts are as universally impactful and selfless as the act of donating blood. Every day in South Africa, countless lives are saved and improved because of the generosity of donors. However, amidst the noble act of giving, a crucial yet often overlooked element stands tall: the importance of maintaining adequate iron levels for the donors.

Understanding and addressing this vital component is not just a matter of personal well-being but a cornerstone of ensuring effective blood donation practices that truly make a difference in the lives of those in need. Low iron levels can lead to fatigue, dizziness, and other health issues, which cannot only affect the quality and quantity of blood donations but also pose a risk to the donor's health, underscoring the importance of maintaining adequate iron levels.

Ensuring the health and wellness of donors is not only a moral obligation but also a responsibility for SANBS. Regular donors play a crucial role in ensuring a steady supply of blood products for medical emergencies, surgeries, and chronic conditions, underscoring the importance of their contribution.

Iron, a major constituent of haemoglobin, declines in the body during blood donation. The body needs iron for various metabolic processes, including the production of new blood cells. To replenish this precious element, we encourage regular and potential new donors to prioritise the supplementation of this precious element.

Donors lose about 250mg of iron during whole blood donation. While the lost iron can be replenished through diet, it may take over 12 weeks for some individuals to recover the lost iron. In addition to supplements, we recommend consuming iron-rich foods such as lean meats, beans, spinach, and fortified cereals.

"At SANBS, we recognise the crucial role iron plays in maintaining healthy blood levels, particularly for blood donors. Iron supplements are essential in replenishing iron stores, ensuring our donors remain healthy and can continue their life-saving contributions. The programme aims to provide iron supplements to whole blood donors between the ages of 16 and 45 to help replenish the iron lost during blood donation." said Dr. Pheello Lethola, SANBS Lead Consultant – Donor Services

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About SANBS

Blood donation takes only 30 minutes, but each donation can save up to three lives. If you're not yet a donor, we encourage you to consider becoming one. For more information on becoming a blood donor, please visit www.sanbs.org.za or call SANBS at 0800 11 9031.

To be eligible to donate blood, one must be between the ages of 16 and 75, weigh more than 50kg, and be in good health. If you meet these requirements, find your nearest donation site by contacting 0800 11 9031, visiting the SANBS website, or follow SANBS on its official social media platforms: Twitter (@theSANBS), Facebook (@SANBS), and Instagram (@thesanbs).