



World Blood Donor Day

20 years of celebrating giving: Thank you, blood donors! 14 JUNE 2024

Blood transfusion plays a critical role in healthcare, benefiting patients in need of blood and its components that face life-threatening conditions, such as sickle cell anemia and thalassemia. Transfusion of blood and blood products helps patients live longer and with a better quality of life. Additionally, blood transfusion supports complex medical and surgical procedures thus making it indispensable in maternal and childcare as well as during man-made and natural disasters.

Unfortunately, in many countries, demand exceeds supply, and blood services face the challenge of making sufficient blood available whilst also ensuring its quality and safety. Voluntary unpaid blood donation is the foundation of a safe and sufficient blood supply. Moreover, voluntary unpaid plasma donations also play a crucial role in supporting patients with a wide range of long-term conditions, such as haemophilia and immune deficiencies.

In May 2005, during the Fifty-Eighth World Health Assembly, Ministers of Health from across the world made a unanimous declaration of commitment and support towards voluntary blood donation. Through Resolution WHA58.13, they designated World Blood Donor Day as an annual event to be held each year on 14 June. The Resolution furthermore urges Member States to implement and support well organized, nationally coordinated and sustainable blood programmes, with appropriate regulatory oversight, so that sufficient safe blood can be collected to meet the needs of patients.

FOCUS OF THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN

The 20th anniversary of World Blood Donor Day in 2024 marks a momentous occasion to reflect on achievements, address challenges, and envision a future where safe blood transfusion is universally accessible. This year's global campaign carries the slogan: **"20 years of celebrating giving: Thank you, blood donors!"** It commemorates the milestone of the 20th anniversary and the profound impact of blood donation on the lives of patients and donors. The campaign serves as an opportunity to express gratitude to blood, plasma, and platelet donors in the world for their lifesaving donations. Moreover, it calls for action, motivating more individuals to join the global movement of blood donation.

Activities may include commemorative events, meetings and workshops, donor appreciation ceremonies, social networking campaigns, special media broadcasts, musical and artistic events to thank blood donors, publication of relevant stories and other activities that help to promote the theme of this year's World Blood Donor Day. Blood services and blood donor organizations are encouraged to use the opportunity to share experiences among peers, engage donors and identify ways of attracting new donors, increasing donor satisfaction and promoting donor loyalty.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN

The objectives of this year's campaign are:

- ♦ to thank and recognize the millions of voluntary blood donors who have contributed to the health and well-being of millions of people around the world.
- ♦ to showcase the achievements and challenges of the national blood programmes and to share best practices and lessons learned.
- ♦ to highlight the continuous need for regular, unpaid blood donation to achieve universal access to safe blood transfusion.
- ♦ to promote a culture of regular blood donation among the youth and the general public and to increase the diversity and sustainability of the blood donor pool.