

CAMPAIGN ESSENTIALS

World Blood Donor Day 2015

**THANK YOU
FOR SAVING
MY LIFE**

World Blood Donor Day
 Give freely, give often. Blood donation matters. 14 JUNE 2015



World Health
Organization

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This toolkit is available electronically and can be found at: <http://www.who.int/campaigns/world-blood-donor-day/2015/en/index.html>

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Table of contents

Public health context.....	1
Origins of the campaign	1
Objectives.....	2
Target audiences.....	2
Theme	2
Slogan.....	3
Key messages.....	3
Campaign materials.....	3
Global event	4
Get involved.....	4
WHO contacts.....	6

Public health context

Transfusion of blood and blood products helps save millions of lives every year. It can help patients suffering from life-threatening conditions live longer and with higher quality of life, and supports complex medical and surgical procedures. It also has an essential, life-saving role in maternal and child care and during man-made and natural disasters.

However, in many countries, there is an inadequate supply of safe blood, and blood services face the challenge of making sufficient blood available while also ensuring its quality and safety. There is a marked difference in the level of access to safe blood between high- and low-income countries.

An adequate supply of safe blood can only be assured through regular donations by voluntary unpaid blood donors.

An adequate supply of safe blood can only be assured through regular donations by voluntary unpaid blood donors. These donors are the safest group of donors as the prevalence of bloodborne infections is lowest among this group. WHO's goal is for all countries to obtain all their blood supplies from voluntary unpaid donors by 2020.

WHO recommends that every country should put in place policies, systems and structures to ensure the safety, quality, accessibility and timely availability of blood and blood products to meet the needs of all patients who require transfusion. Policies should be supported by appropriate legislation to promote uniform implementation of standards and consistency in the quality and safety of blood and blood products. All activities related to blood collection, testing, processing, storage and distribution should be coordinated at the national level through effective organization and management.

Origins of the campaign

The first World Blood Donor Day was observed in 2004, which was followed by its designation as an annual global event by the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly in 2005.¹ World Blood Donor Day is now celebrated each year throughout the world on 14 June to raise awareness of the importance of blood donation and to recognize the contribution of voluntary unpaid blood donors in saving lives and improving health.

World Blood Donor Day has a further purpose: to create wider awareness throughout the world about the need for availability and appropriate use of safe blood and blood products, and the need for many more people to make a commitment to regular voluntary unpaid blood donation.

World Blood Donor Day is now celebrated every year throughout the world on 14 June.

The date of 14 June is the birthday of Karl Landsteiner (1868–1943), an Austrian biologist and physician, considered to be the “founder” of modern blood transfusion. Landsteiner discovered the ABO blood groups in 1901, developed the modern system of classification of blood groups, and identified, in 1937, together with Alexander S. Wiener, the Rhesus factor, thus enabling physicians to transfuse blood without endangering a patient's life.

¹ See http://www.who.int/entity/bloodsafety/WHA58_13-en.pdf

World Blood Donor Day provides a springboard for blood safety programmes and campaigns throughout the year, as well as wider activities to strengthen blood transfusion services. It is designed to complement rather than replace the national blood donor days or weeks that are organized in a number of countries. Some are held at the same time as World Blood Donor Day while others take place at different times of the year.

Objectives

The objectives of this year's campaign are to:

- ◆ thank blood donors for their life-saving donations;
- ◆ promote regular voluntary unpaid blood donation;
- ◆ create wider public awareness of the need for regular donation because of the short shelf-life of blood components and to encourage existing and potential donors to donate blood at regular intervals
- ◆ focus attention on donor health and the quality of donor care as critical factors in building donor commitment and a willingness to donate regularly; and
- ◆ persuade ministries of health to show their appreciation of regular voluntary unpaid donors and provide adequate resources to provide quality donor care.

Target audiences

The primary target audiences for World Blood Donor Day are donors who regularly give blood and healthy people who are eligible to give blood but are not yet occasional or regular donors.

Health officials at national level who are responsible for setting national policy and systems for blood donation and transfusion are another important target audience.

International partners (see Box 1), national blood transfusion services, Red Cross societies, donor associations and professional societies each have an important role to play, both in supporting countries towards self-sufficiency in this area and in disseminating campaign messages.

Partners

WHO has worked with a number of partners to promote voluntary blood donation through the celebration of World Blood Donor Day since the first one in 2004.

These include: the International Federation of Blood Donor Organizations, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the International Society of Blood Transfusion.

Theme

The theme of this year's campaign is "Thank you for saving my life". It focuses on thanking blood donors who save lives every day through their blood donations and strongly encourages more people all over the world to donate blood voluntarily and regularly.

The campaign aims to highlight stories from people whose lives have been saved through blood donation, as a way of motivating regular blood donors to continue giving blood and people in good health who have never given blood, particularly young people, to begin doing so.

Slogan

The slogan for the 2015 campaign is "Give freely, give often. Blood donation matters."

Key messages

The safe transfusion of blood and blood products helps save millions of lives every year. It can help patients suffering from life-threatening conditions live longer and with a higher quality of life, as well as supporting complex medical and surgical procedures. It also has an essential, life-saving role in maternal and child care and during man-made and natural disasters.

However, in many countries, demand for exceeds supply and blood services face the constant challenge of making sufficient blood available, while also ensuring its quality and safety. In 2015, more than 40 years after the first World Health Assembly resolution (WHA28.72) addressed the issue of blood safety, equitable access to safe blood and blood products and the rational and safe use of blood transfusion still remain major challenges throughout the world; and many patients requiring transfusion do not have timely access to safe blood.

An adequate supply can only be ensured through regular donations by voluntary unpaid blood donors. However, today, only in 62 countries have national blood supplies based on close to 100% voluntary unpaid blood donations, with 40 countries still dependent on family donors and even paid donors.

WHO has been providing support to Member States for strengthening service delivery and safety for improving access to safe blood and blood products for patients in need.

Campaign materials

Our campaign web site is <http://www.who.int/campaigns/world-blood-donor-day/2015/en/>

Files for WBDD announcement and web banners in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, and design files for promotional items such as posters, T-shirts, caps, mugs, pens, car stickers and gift tags in English and French can be downloaded from the site.

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Global event

The global host for the 2015 World Blood Donor Day event is China through its blood centre in Shanghai, Shanghai Blood Centre (SBC), also the WHO Collaborating Centre for Blood Transfusion Services.

Get involved

There are many ways to get involved in World Blood Donor Day. Here are some ideas.

Everyone

- ◆ Participate in local events being organized to celebrate World Blood Donor Day.
- ◆ Give blood at your nearest blood collection centre.

Ministries of health

- ◆ Organize and participate in activities to celebrate World Blood Donor Day and promote voluntary unpaid blood donation to the public, across government and to other sectors.
- ◆ Speak to the media about the importance of blood donation and the successes and challenges of your country in meeting national needs of blood through voluntary unpaid donations in line with the theme of this year's World Blood Donor Day.
- ◆ Distribute posters and leaflets about blood donation to health centres.

International organizations

- ◆ Provide updated information on blood transfusion and blood safety to your members.
- ◆ Organize or participate in international, national and local events.
- ◆ Urge media outlets to run special features and editorials on blood donation.

National blood transfusion services

- ◆ Organize blood collection drives.
- ◆ Invite prominent politicians, celebrities and sporting heroes to participate in World Blood Donor Day celebrations.
- ◆ Disseminate information about the importance of giving blood.
- ◆ Print out and distribute posters that you can download from the World Blood Donor Day campaign web site.
- ◆ Produce, display and disseminate promotional materials such as T-shirts, caps and car stickers.
- ◆ Hold a donor recognition awards ceremony to honour individuals and partner organizations who have made significant contributions to blood donation activities in your country.
- ◆ Hold open days at blood centres and invite the general public to learn about blood donation and blood transfusion.

Journalists

- ◆ Broadcast messages and write articles about blood donation and the need for access to safe blood and blood products.

- ◆ Write articles about how close your country is to meeting national needs for blood through voluntary unpaid donations.
- ◆ Interview staff from the ministry of health and blood transfusion services.
- ◆ Write feature stories about people whose lives have been saved as a result of blood donation, or about people who are first-time donors, or have donated blood a record number of times.
- ◆ Attend events organized to celebrate World Blood Donor Day and write about them.

Tell us about your events

Through our web site

We appreciate hearing about events and activities that you are organizing. Let us, and others, know about your plans by registering your event through the following link: http://www.who.int/campaigns/world-blood-donor-day/2015/event_registration/en/index.html

Through our social media channels

Closer to World Blood Donor Day, we will be linking to campaign materials through our Facebook page, YouTube channel and Google+. Through these channels, you can let us know how you will be involved too.



Facebook



YouTube



Google+

You can also follow us on [Twitter@WHO](#). Join the conversation using the hashtag [#GiveBlood](#). Follow our World Blood Donor Day tweets and retweet those of interest to your own networks.



Twitter

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