What else should I know?

- Your body will replace the platelets you have donated within 48 hours. We do however, limit you to a maximum of 24 donations per year.
- Once you become a platelet donor you will no longer donate ‘whole blood’ regular blood donations. Your details will now be entered into a separate donor database.
- Throughout your 2 - 4 hour stay with us, you will be assisted by our professionally trained medical staff, who will ensure your comfort.
- New, sterile equipment is used for each donation and destroyed after use, so there is no risk of infection during the process.
- A full blood count will be done on arrival during your first platelet donation.

So finally, if you are a committed donor who wants to go the extra mile, give our Specialised Donation Department a call and make an appointment (see contact details).

Contact Details:

If you have any questions or concerns about apheresis platelet donation, please do not hesitate to contact our Specialised Donation Department:

**Telephone numbers**
- Main Switchboard 021 507 6300
- Specialised Donation Department 021 531 0704

**E-mail**
info@wpbts.org.za

**Website**
www.wpblood.org.za

**Head Office Address**
Western Province Blood Transfusion Service
Old Mill Road, Pinelands 7405, Cape Town
PO Box 79, Howard Place, 7450

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APHESIS
PLATELET DONATION
It’s remarkable!

You’re a regular blood donor. You have a normal platelet count (we’ll notify you if you do), manage your own time and are able to donate at specific donation sites.

This means that you are eligible to do something extra remarkable - you are the ideal candidate for our Apheresis Platelet Donation programme.

What is apheresis platelet donation?

During this procedure, you are able to donate a specific blood component, in this case platelets - those sticky little cells in your blood that control bleeding and promote clotting.

We obtain them by passing your blood through a cell separator. Don’t worry, we don’t take them all - just a small fraction. The red cells are returned to you as part of the apheresis procedure.

Why are apheresis platelet donations needed?

Different patients have different needs. Some cannot produce sufficient platelets and they need regular help from our special platelet donors.

Some of these patients suffer from:
- Aplastic anaemia
- Cancer
- Leukaemia
- Trauma and burns
- Those who are awaiting bone marrow or an organ transplant
- Those who have undergone prolonged surgery

What does it take to become an apheresis platelet donor?

Are you eager to join this remarkable group of donors? Here’s the criteria - you must:

- Meet our regular donor criteria.
- Have donated blood at least five times without adverse effects.
- Have an adequate platelet count - we’ll let you know if you do.
- Have good veins.
- Complete a detailed questionnaire every time to ensure there is no risk to you or the recipient.
- Not have taken aspirin or anti-inflammatory medication within 72 hours before donating.

Is there a catch...?

Well, because this is such a specialised type of donation, only offered at specific centres, it requires extra commitment to be a platelet donor.

And although your donation will be processed within hours, it only has a “shelf life” of 5 days.

- Currently, the only donation site is in Pinelands. Therefore you must be able to travel to us.
- You have to sit in a chair (it’s comfy, we promise!) for 2 - 4 hours while we carry out the procedure. See it as a bit of well-deserved relaxation time.
- You are ‘on call’ every day. Such is the demand for platelets and our very sick patients.
- You may be called to donate more than once a month.

We know that this is a big ask, but that is why we think our platelet donors are very, very special. Just go back to that list of people who you will be helping.

www.wpblood.org.za