



ALL ABOUT



RARE DONOR PROGRAMME

You are Remarkable!

Why we need YOU

Blood types are inherited and because of this, a person with a rare blood type may have family members with that same rare blood type. If you are identified as a rare blood donor, please encourage your family members to donate blood. The chances are one in four that the siblings of a person with a rare blood type will have the same rare blood type.

Regular blood donors can give blood every 56 days. Rare donors are encouraged to give blood regularly. Each precious bag of rare blood can be frozen in long-term storage facilities for up to ten years, so it will be available for patients when required.



Contact Details:

If you are identified as a rare donor, we would love to enter you on our "Rare Donor Panel" database and call on you as needed.



Telephone numbers

Main Switchboard 021 507 6300
Reference Laboratory 021 507 6339 / 6330



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



Facebook

'Like' us on WP Blood



Twitter

Follow us on @WPBlood



PBR21 (01 Oct 14)



WP Blood Transfusion Service
Do something remarkable



WP Blood Transfusion Service
Do something remarkable

RARE BLOOD TYPES

What I need to know.



What is a rare blood type?

Your blood contains red blood cells. On the surface of those cells are sugar and protein substances called "antigens". Rare blood is classified because some people lack common (high incidence) antigens on the red cells or a combination of several more common antigens. This makes the blood unique. Due to certain illnesses or compatibility issues following multiple transfusions, certain patients may need blood from rare donors, because they have produced red cell antibodies. Others are due to an inherited rare antigen typing and require a more specific match.

Rare donors in the Western Cape

The WP Blood Transfusion Service (WPBTS) currently has a panel of rare donors. The blood of these rare donors is stored in a frozen state. Both Blood Services in South Africa have access to this source of rare blood.

WPBTS aims to increase our panel of rare donors for use nationally and internationally. This is especially important considering our diverse population. Therefore, the Service is currently extending its testing methods to include DNA testing as an additional tool to identify rare blood types and increase the number of donors on our Rare Donor Panel.



The International Rare Blood Donor Programme:

When a patient needs rare blood for a transfusion, time is of the essence. Finding rare blood is however a time consuming and difficult process.

In aid of this, the International Panel of Rare Blood Donors was established in 1965 by the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT). The day to day running is assigned to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) International Blood Group Reference Laboratory (IBGRL) in Bristol, UK.

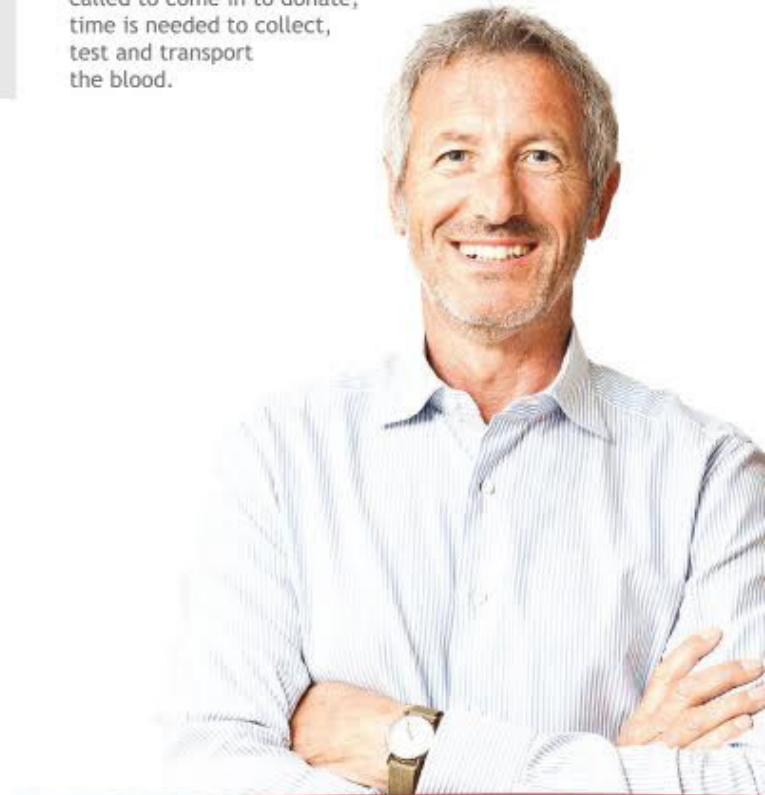
The role of the IBGRL is to compile information on rare donors that have been identified at blood donation centres around the world and to make this information available when rare blood is needed. Requests for rare blood are internationally co-ordinated when required.



How the process works

When the local Blood Service is not able to provide the rare blood required for a patient, a search is carried out nationally and if the blood type is not sourced, the International Panel of Rare Blood Donors is contacted to search their database for rare donors whose blood type matches that of the patient.

Once a match is found, the Blood Service is asked to send rare banked blood, or if not available, contact the rare blood donor to donate as soon as possible. If a rare blood donor must be called to come in to donate, time is needed to collect, test and transport the blood.



To learn more about the International Rare Donor Program, please contact WPBTS or visit the ISBT website at www.isbtweb.org.