

What type of donation will I be eligible to give?

A transgender donor will be eligible to give a whole blood donation. They will not be eligible to donate platelets by apheresis because of the issues relating to blood volume discussed above.

What happens next?

The donor will be invited to an assessment with a doctor, who will go through all the relevant questions with the donor.

If the donor is on hormone replacement therapy (HRT) they will need to be on a stable hormone dose for one year to be eligible to donate.

If the donor is found to be eligible to donate, the doctor will complete the relevant paperwork to make changes to our computer system, if required.

Once the computer changes have been applied to the donor record, the donor will be eligible to donate if they meet all other IBTS criteria, which ensures the safety of both donors and recipients.

We ask that you notify us of any changes that have occurred since your last donation which may affect your ability to donate.

Additional information

If you require additional information about blood donation as a transgender or non binary person please contact us on **Freephone: 1800 60 20 20**.

TRANSGENDER AND NON-BINARY DONORS INFORMATION LEAFLET



IRISH BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

National Blood Centre,
James's Street, Dublin D08 NH5R

MUNSTER REGIONAL TRANSFUSION CENTRE

St. Finbarr's Hospital, Douglas Road, Cork T12 Y319

www.giveblood.ie

IBTS/MEDV/DI/0001 [1]



Giving blood

The Irish Blood Transfusion Service welcomes potential donors, including transgender and non-binary donors. However there are a number of issues to be considered in relation to transgender and non-binary donors, which may impact on their eligibility to donate. This leaflet outlines the criteria that need to be considered. Any donor, who identifies themselves as transgender or non-binary, should not donate until their eligibility to donate has been assessed by a doctor. This assessment can be scheduled by calling **Freephone: 1800 60 20 20** or by talking to one of the staff on clinic who will pass on your queries to the relevant medical staff.

Transgender and Non - binary donors

All donors are entitled to self-identify their gender as per the Gender Recognition Act 2015. The IBTS will accept the gender the donor identifies as, however, we are limited by current restrictions of our computer system, which can only record the binary response of male or female as a gender. We are working with our international colleagues to include non-binary options into the gender field of our computer system. In the interim a binary option of male or female will need to be selected in order to donate.

Existing donors

An existing donor will need to be assessed by a doctor to ascertain their eligibility to continue donating blood or blood components. An appointment can be scheduled by calling Freephone 1800 60 20 20 or by talking to one of the staff on clinic, who will pass on your queries to the relevant medical staff.

Haemoglobin

The required haemoglobin range is that of the donor's gender identity/expression. In the case of a change in gender identity/expression to transgender male, the donors haemoglobin would have to reach the higher male requirement 13.5 -17.9 g/dl and the following range would apply in the case of a transgender female 12.5 -16.4 g/dl.

Donors may not be eligible to donate if their haemoglobin is outside the range for donation of their gender identity/expression i.e. too high or too low. In these cases it will not be possible to take a unit of blood from the donor.

The hormones in your bloodstream may affect the haemoglobin ranges; therefore we need to know if you are on hormone replacement therapy and on a stable dose of hormones for 12 months prior to starting donating.

If the donor's haemoglobin is within the range for donating, as specified for their gender identity/expression, then a donation will be taken. The donor may be anaemic in relation to their assigned birth gender. This may be due to an underlying condition which remains undetected. In this case the risk is a delayed diagnosis that may have clinical implications for the donor. If you have any concerns in relation to your haemoglobin please call the Freephone number or talk to one of the staff on the clinic.

Confidentiality

The IBTS takes confidentiality of data seriously and we restrict access to personal sensitive data to a limited number of staff on a need to know basis. We will never share your data with external or third parties without your explicit consent.

Why can I not donate straight away?

There are a number of considerations that need to be reviewed before accepting a donation from a transgender or non-binary donor; some of these considerations are listed below. In order to ensure the continued safety of our donors and recipients we need to carry out a one to one interview to assess a transgender or non-binary person's eligibility to donate.

Areas for consideration

Pregnancy

Donors who have ever been pregnant may carry antibodies in their blood. There are cases where receiving a unit of blood with these antibodies could be an issue for babies still in the womb or new born infants. It is the IBTS policy to use blood/ blood components from cis-male donors only in these situations.

Blood volume

A total blood volume (TBV) is a calculation used to assess a donor's eligibility to donate. It is measured based on a donor's height, weight and gender. In line with European guidelines, all donors require a blood volume of at least 3.5 litres to donate safely. Generally a minimum weight requirement ensures that donors meet this standard, however the IBTS has noted a higher incidence of fainting in new and returning female donors and has introduced guidelines to assess these donors' blood volume prior to donation. In order to protect the safety of transgender male donors, The IBTS will calculate the TBV of all transgender donors. Changes that occur when taking hormones (HRT) will affect an individual's muscle and fat mass which could affect their TBV.

Sexual activity

During transition donors will answer the sexual risk questions on the Health and Lifestyle Questionnaire (HLQ) that are relevant to the gender that they identify as.

A transgender person who has had sex with a male (transgender or cisgender) or another transgender person in the past twelve months will be deferred for twelve months from the last sexual contact. If the sexual activity is on-going, the donor will in effect be permanently deferred.