

Journey of Blood



A unit of blood is drawn from a volunteer donor.



Blood is transfused to patient in need. Just one blood donation has the potential to save three lives.



Blood is collected into a sterile bag and labelled.



Units are transported to the nearest SANBS testing and processing lab.



SANBS
South African National Blood Service

Your blood saves lives.

Blood products are stored prior to transfusion. The shelf life of blood is limited.



Platelets expire in 5 days. Red blood cells expire in 42 days. Plasma has a 1 year shelf life from the day of collection.



Local hospitals place orders with SANBS for blood products based on their needs.



In the processing laboratory, blood is spun down in a centrifuge and then separated into its different components.



Blood is tested to ensure that it is safe for transfusion.



Plasma

Contains proteins and clotting factors used to treat patients with massive bleeding or clotting factor deficiencies.



Red blood cells

Contain haemoglobin, a protein that carries oxygen throughout the body. Used to treat patients with anaemia or blood loss due to trauma or surgery.



Platelets

Crucial in helping blood clots. Patients with low platelet levels often suffer from bruising and bleeding.