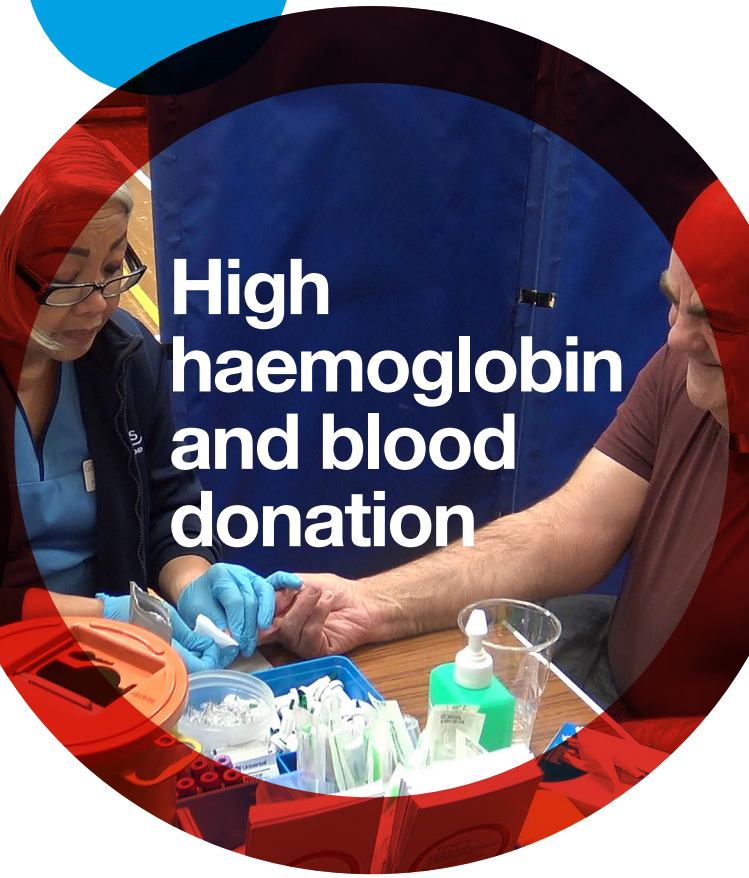
NHS
National Services Scotland



High haemoglobin and blood donation

SCOTTISH NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE

Thank you for coming to give blood today. We are sorry that we could not take a donation from you this time. This is because your haemoglobin level was higher than our upper limit for donation.

What is haemoglobin?

Haemoglobin is a protein that carries oxygen around the body. It gives blood its red colour.

Haemoglobin levels

We need to make sure that your haemoglobin level is within the limits that we set for donation. We do this by testing a small sample of your blood before you donate. Men tend to have higher levels of haemoglobin than women. To give **blood**, a man needs to have a haemoglobin level between 135 g/L and 180g/L. A woman needs to have a haemoglobin level between 125 g/L and 165 g/L.

To give **plasma**, a man needs to have a haemoglobin level between 130 g/L and 180g/L. A woman needs to have a haemoglobin level between 120 g/L and 165 g/L.



My haemoglobin level was too high to donate. What does this mean for me?

There are many possible reasons for having a haemoglobin level above normal. Some healthy individuals will naturally have a slightly higher level than normal.

Other reasons include:

- **dehydration**
- **smoking**
- **living at high altitude**
- **heart or lung disease**
- **bone marrow problems**
- **kidney disease**

We advise any donor with a raised haemoglobin level to let their GP know. You may need a further blood test to rule out any problems.

Why did you do two tests?

The finger prick test is a quick way to check your haemoglobin is at the right level to give blood. If this test gives a high reading, we ask for a second sample, taken directly from a vein, to confirm the result.

When can I come to give blood again?

You can come back to give blood in three months. We would advise you to have plenty to drink before you come, so you avoid dehydration. If you smoke, stopping or cutting down will also help lower haemoglobin levels.

What happens if my haemoglobin is too high again?

Some healthy individuals tend to have a high haemoglobin level. If this applies to you, and you have already been assessed by your GP, you may be able to keep giving blood. Please get in touch for more advice.



Donor name: _____

Donor number: _____

Date: _____

Your haemoglobin was measured today using a point-of-care device.

Your haemoglobin result is _____ g/L

This result is from a:

☐ Capillary sample ☐ Venous sample

As this result is higher than normal, we advise you to discuss this with your GP, who will decide if you need any further tests. You should wait three months before coming back to give blood.

Staff member name:

_____

Signature: _____

Additional comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Contact us

t: 0345 90 90 999
e: nss.snbtsenquiry@nhs.scot
w: scotblood.co.uk

givebloodforscotland

@givebloodscot

This publication can be made available in large print, braille (English only), audio tape and different languages. Please contact **nss.communications@nhs.scot** for further information.

NATL 017 05
Published April 2024