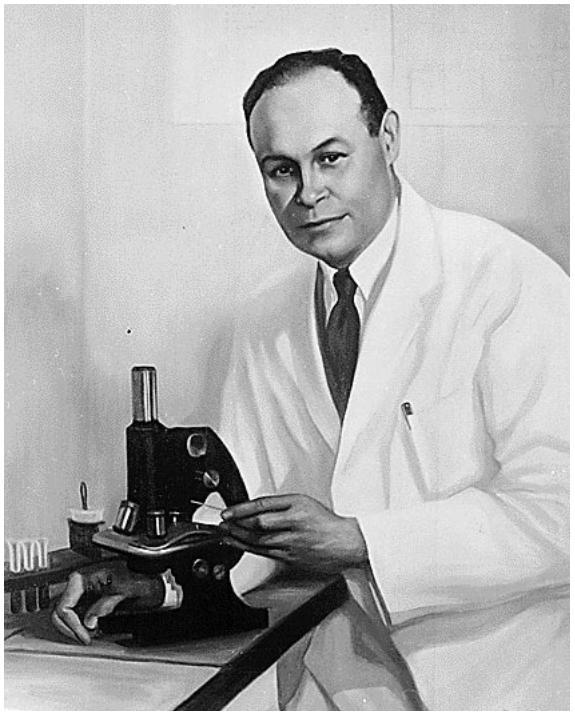
Charles Drew Community Blood Campaign

Dr. Charles Drew was an African American physician recognized as the father of modern day blood banking. He revolutionized blood bank preservation techniques in the 1940's.

The Charles Drew Community Blood Campaign aims to increase the number of African American blood donors and also matches blood donations to children with sickle cell disease who have suffered a stroke. The current recommended treatment to prevent future strokes in these children is scheduled blood transfusions.



Dr. Charles R Drew portrait - Transferred from en.wikipedia; Licensed under Public domain via Wikimedia Commons.

How can you help?

Please become a blood donor today! You may donate as an individual. Also, organizations are needed to help sponsor blood drives on a regular basis.

If your organization is interested in sponsoring a drive, or would like more information, please contact:

Indiana Hemophilia & Thrombosis Center, Inc.
317-871-0000 | 1-877-CLOTTER

Indiana Blood Center
1-800-632-4722 ext. 5150

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Share the *gift* of life

the importance of blood donation from the African American community

What is sickle cell disease?

Sickle cell disease is an inherited disorder that affects an estimated 100,000 people in the United States. People with sickle cell disease have abnormal red blood cells, the cells that carry oxygen throughout the body. These abnormal cells develop a sickle shape, giving the disease its name. These sickle cells become caught in the small blood vessels (capillaries and veins) and block the flow of blood and oxygen to cells, tissues, and organs. This blockage of blood flow can cause permanent damage to the brain, lungs, kidneys, eyes, and bones.

Currently Bone Marrow Transplantation is the cure for sickle cell, but due to certain risks, it is not available to everyone. Blood transfusions are used during periods of acute illness, or in preparation for surgery. In those affected by stroke, regular, scheduled blood transfusions have been shown to decrease the risk of recurrent events by 90%.

Did you know...?

» A child with sickle cell disease may need up to 72 pints of blood annually.

» Over 90% of those living with sickle cell disease are African American.

African Americans need to receive the most compatible blood for tranfusion.

As over 90% of people affected with sickle cell disease are African American, specifically matched blood is required. But only 0.5% of blood donors in Indiana are African American.

When a person receives multiple blood transfusions, as for sickle cell disease, the body notices the small differences between its red blood cells and donor's red blood cells. This can lead to development of antibodies, which makes further transfusion more difficult. It is better to receive blood from a person of the same ethnic background; as it is more likely to match closely, it decreases the risk of antibody formation. Blood from African American, African, or Latino donors has different red blood cell surface proteins than blood from Caucasian donors.

Rare Blood Typing

Many red blood cell traits are carried only within the African American population. These traits are different than the major blood groups of which you may have heard (type 0, A, B, and AB). These rare traits play a major role in antibody development in persons who receive multiple blood transfusions, such as persons with sickle cell disease.

Blood Donation Questions

How long does it take to donate blood?

The actual donation takes about 15 minutes. The entire process takes approximately 1 hour. There are four steps: registration, medical screening, donation, and relaxation. Each step takes about 5-15 minutes.

Can I donate if I have high blood pressure or diabetes?

Most people with high blood pressure or diabetes that are managed with medication can donate.

Can I donate if I have allergies?

Most people with allergies can donate.

I'm sick right now - can I still donate?

If you are on antibiotics for an infection,or have a sore throat, cold or flu, you should wait to donate. When you have finished your antibiotics and are feeling well, you may donate.

Can I get HIV/AIDS from donating blood?

No, it is not possible to contract HIV (AIDS) from donating blood. A new sterile needle is used for each person who gives blood. The needle is used only once and then it is destroyed.

Can I donate if I have sickle cell trait?

Yes, your blood is still needed and would be used for the general population. Persons with sickle cell disease cannot receive blood from persons with sickle cell trait.