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# BLOOD BUZZ

MAY 2019 | VOLUME 22



PAGE 3

*Blood donors unexpectedly meet the patients whose lives they helped save.*

PAGE 6

**Donors Bleed For The Throne**

PAGE 8

**Donor Awards Function in Paarl**

PAGE 9

**Donating before a Sport Competition**

PAGE 13

**Open Day in Worcester**





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# Winter is coming!

As we start feeling the chill in the air, I would like to thank all our loyal donors and all our new donors who have made blood donations during the first part of the year. We would not have been able to meet the blood supply demands of the Western Cape if it was not for you.

We had the opportunity to join forces with the South African National Blood Service, MNet, HBO and Smile90.4 FM to run the 'Bleed for your Throne' campaign. This formed part of the Game of Thrones Final Season. Read more about the extraordinary campaign in our newsletter.



We are proud to share great stories of donors and recipients meeting, highlighting the fact that anyone can donate. View these heart-warming encounters on our YouTube Channel (Western Cape Blood Service).



Winter is truly on its way and during May, June, July and August we would like to keep all our donors snug and warm by giving you a pair of socks when you donate. Each month will see a different design sock, make sure you get your hands (or your feet) on these trendy socks.

Yours in blood donation  
Michelle Vermeulen ■



## Majed's journey

RECIPIENT STORY

**Majed Almhdi was born** with sickle-cell anaemia and was diagnosed with this disease at the age of 2. Sickle-cell anaemia has changed Majed's life in various ways.

Majed explains that sickle-cell anaemia is when your body does not produce enough red blood cells. The red blood cells from his bone marrow are produced in the wrong shape - instead of it being in a doughnut shape it, it is in the shape of a banana. Wrong shaped blood cells do not carry enough oxygen through the bloodstream and this causes clotting. He has to visit the hospital on a regular basis to receive pain management as well as blood transfusions. He has received over 200 blood transfusions in his lifetime.

He would like to thank our blood donors for making the lifesaving decision to donate blood, which has a huge impact, not only on his life, but on many other recipients.

View his and other recipient stories on our YouTube Channel. ■

# DONOR HEROES

BY BONGIWE SIPUNZI



## TASNEEM PATEL

*Number of donations: 1*

### *Why do you donate blood?*

"I always wanted to donate, as my blood type is O. Most of my family donates blood, and this is the first time I had a chance to donate blood."

### *Message to potential donors:*

"I motivate people to read about blood donation and the need for blood in the Western Cape. It is also important for everyone to know their blood type. I inform them that there are also more benefits to donating blood."



## MR MA JARDIEN

*Number of donations: 1*

### *Why do you donate blood?*

"I was always scared of needles. I was encouraged by the WCBS blood drive and braved it."

### *Message to potential donors:*

"I would like to encourage everyone to do the same and donate blood as it is for our good to help other people that we might never even meet."



## SHAYKH FADIHL

*Number of donations: 1*

### *Why do you donate blood?*

"I never thought it was that important to donate blood until I saw a presentation from the WCBS. I did not realise the huge need for blood in the Western Cape."

### *Message to potential donors:*

"We always expect others to give without realising the importance of the little bit we can contribute."



## DEON FRANS

*Number of donations: 7*

### *Why do you donate blood?*

"I donate blood to help other people and make a difference in the community."

### *Message to potential donors:*

"I motivate other people to donate blood as they might be doing it for a family member."



## NAZEEM HOLMES

*Number of donations: 1*

### *Why do you donate blood?*

"My father used to be a blood donor and I followed suit."

### *Message to potential donors:*

"There is nothing to be scared of, and it costs nothing."



**JASMINA JOHAAR**

*Number of donations: 1*

*Why do you donate blood?*

“I feel good about myself knowing that I have saved someone’s life.”

*Message to potential donors:*

“The process is really quick. Please don’t make excuses - just do it.”



**WESLEY NORMAN**

*Number of donations: 1*

*Why do you donate blood?*

“I decided to donate blood to do my part in helping save lives; it is everyone’s responsibility to do it while they still can.”

*Message to potential donors:*

“I encourage others to donate as they have the power to help save someone else.”



**ZAID DANTIE**

*Number of donations: 86*

*Why do you donate blood?*

“As partners of the WCBS, it is a great idea to lead by example, that is why I came to donate today.”

*Message to potential donors:*

“I would like to encourage the community to participate and donate blood and become regular blood donors to ensure a sufficient and sustainable blood supply in the Western Cape.”



**ANWAR ROSSOUW**

*Number of donations: 7*

*Why do you donate blood?*

“I was motivated to donate blood as I lost my father due to anaemia.”

*Message to potential donors:*

“Donating blood is one of those things that you can do to help save lives.”



**VINCENT RICH**

*Number of donations: 150*

*Why do you donate blood?*

“I donate because there is a high demand for blood.”

*Message to potential donors:*

“It’s for a good cause, everyone eligible to donate should do it.”





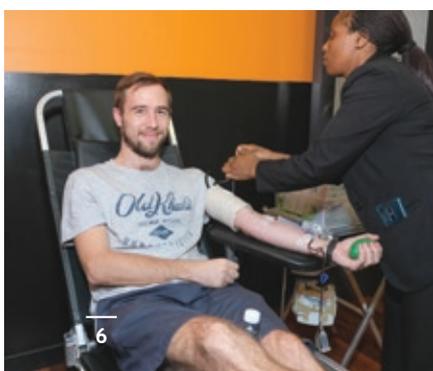
# Bleed for the Throne

BY VUYO MGULI

The Western Cape Blood Service (WCBS) in conjunction with MNet, HBO and Nu-metro were invited to celebrate the final season of Game of Thrones by giving all the fans and donors the opportunity to show their devotion and 'Bleed for the Throne'. For those who follow the fantasy television series, audiences will know that each season has no shortage of gore, and for this reason the bloodshed was brought to life in the aptly - named activation #BleedForTheThrone.

The campaign was held at the Canal Walk Nu-metro foyer, N1 City Mall Blood donation centre as well as Smile 90.4FM studios. Everyone who donated blood during that time either received an exclusive T-shirt, a movie ticket or a free smoothie after the donations.

The activation was a success; the blood drives had a combined collection of 178 units. ■



# 2019 Cape Town Cycle Tour

BY PAMELA NTSEKE

On the morning of Sunday 10 March 2019, before the rooster crowed, a group of Western Cape Blood Service (WCBS) staff members woke up from their homes with the 'dawn chorus' of the Robin, to prepare for an exciting day ahead. They aimed to reach the WCBS head office in Pinelands by 04:15 from where they would be transported to reach their volunteer station located close to the end of Prince George Drive by latest 05:00. This is where they were expected to be set up and ready to serve Cape Town Cycle Tour cyclists by 06:00.

The volunteers helped at the refreshment station by serving cool drinks, energy drinks and water to the thousands of cyclists that stopped for a breather. Three of these volunteers were tasked with serving as Marshals on the day. The first group of cyclists whooshed past our station like the wind around 06:15.

It is amazing that most of the cyclists finished this race as the wind had no mercy on anyone on the day. The volunteer Paramedics, who were also stationed at this stop, had their work cut out for them.

We are extremely proud of the Western Cape Blood Service cycling team that braved the gushing wind as they cycled to the finish on that day. These include our CEO & Medical Director,



Dr Gregory Bellairs; Staff Health Professional Nurse, Sr Isabel Steenkamp; Specialised Donations Administrator, Mr Kyle Mullins and Promotions Officer Mrs Estellé Lecoq. We will be looking out for you and more cyclists next time.

We are looking forward to more exciting events like these. ■

## Ramadan Awareness Campaign

BY AISHAH SALIE

During the winter months (May, June, July and August), the Western Cape Blood Service (WCBS) experience a significant drop in blood stocks. This is mainly due to the start of winter when many donors suffer from colds and flu. Another factor is Muslim donors who are fasting and unable to donate blood.

During the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims abstain from consuming any food, from sunrise until sunset. One of the requirements to donate blood is to eat before donating, thus excluding new or regular donors from giving blood during Ramadan. For the past few years, the fasting month has coincided with the core winter months, putting further strain on our blood stock.

The Muslim Judicial Council (MJC) was approached and a partnership was formed to encourage Muslim donors to donate blood before Ramadan. The MJC along with other leading organisations within the media collaborated with the WCBS to



Blood donation clinic hosted at the MJC on 11 April collected 23 units of blood and 19 new donors were added to our donor base. A total of 43 people attended the clinic.

support a Ramadan Awareness Campaign. An awareness clinic was hosted at the MJC Head Office which saw Muslim Leaderships (Ulama) supporting the cause of blood donation. Community radio station, Voice of the Cape (VOC), presented their mid-morning show from the premises and encouraged the community to support the clinic.

Clinics were hosted at Vangate Mall, Westgate Mall, Kenilworth Centre, Ryland's Village and Promenade Shopping Centre a few weeks before the start of Ramadan to make blood donation accessible to donors before the fast.

As part of this campaign, WCBS recorded its very first radio advert targeted at the Muslim community which had been aired on both Radio 786 & Voice of the Cape (VOC) community stations. The importance of blood donation and saving lives was also re-iterated at several mosques across the Western Cape during the Friday 'Jumua' prayers. ■

# REGIONAL NEWS

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## Paarl hosts Donor Awards Function

BY JILL NICHOLAS

The Paarl Regional Branch held their Donor Awards Function in the beautiful surroundings of Paarl at Picardie Guesthouse.

This milestone event was attended by 42 donors, some coming from as far as Lamberts Bay. The guest speaker was the 17-year old Danielle Booyesen, a Grade 11 learner at La Rochelle Girls High, who has been living with Hodgkin's lymphoma since the age of 4. Her storytelling of a journey with cancer left many guests with a tear in their eyes.

Present at the event was Nicky Du Toit, Chief Financial Officer, who showcased what we have achieved over the past 80 years and also handed out our milestone certificates. ■



## DC Partner's Valentines Day Bleed

BY ARLECIA NOVEMBER

DC Partner continually motivates and encourages all staff members to donate blood at their blood donation clinic. Donor representative, Riette van Pletzer, together with management, try to keep the clinic alive through lucky draws and giveaways at most of their clinics.

Recently, one lucky staff member won a 2-night stay at Botlierskop Private Game Reserve in Little Brak River, which included a game drive. At this clinic, we collected 38 units of blood, with a total attendance of 49.

On Valentine's Day they had a total attendance of 61 donors, with more than ten new donors who came to donate.

Thank you to all the staff members at DC Partner who continue to support our blood donation clinics. ■



## Should you donate blood before a sports competition?

BY DR CAROLINE HILTON

Our current donation guidelines state that a donor participating in a major sporting event cannot donate one week before the competition and three days after that. Seeing as outdoor sports are so popular in the Western Cape, this rule is regularly challenged by many of our dedicated donors who like to participate in cycling and running events.

The reasons for deferring donors relate to donor safety and potential compromise of their performance during the race. Blood carries red blood cells which contain the haemoglobin molecule that allows for these cells to transport oxygen throughout the body and provide energy for our

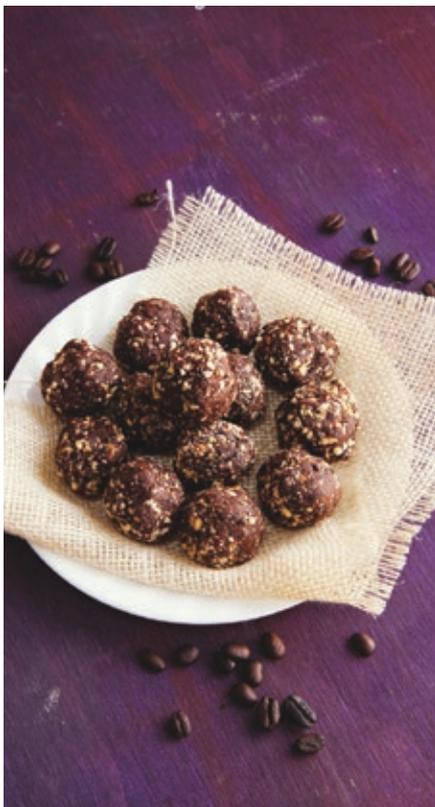


tissues. Following the loss of about 450ml of blood in a donation, the bone marrow needs some time to produce more red cells. In addition to this, participation in a sporting event would result in increased physical exertion and oxygen demand for the body, so donating blood close to a race may compromise this performance.

Studies performed in endurance athletes who have heavy training schedules show that blood donation can impair performance for up to 4-8 weeks following

donation, but this is not thought to be the case for people who engage in non-competitive sports.

Our advice to people wanting to donate blood prior to sporting races would be to be cognisant of the timing of the donation and effect on their performance, to drink plenty of fluid prior to and after the donation to allow their body to compensate more easily for the blood loss, and to reduce the intensity of training immediately following the donation. ■



## 5-Minute Scrumptious, Simple Chocolate-Coffee Energy Bites

Time: 5 mins | Makes 12

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup pitted Medjool dates (about 15 whole dates)
- ½ cup raw almonds
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tablespoons ground coffee
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- Pinch of salt

### Method:

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor. Pulse until the almonds are in very small pieces and the mixture holds together when squeezed. Using wet hands, form into twelve balls. Enjoy.

# YOUNGBLOOD

BY MARIKE GEVERS

As most of you would know, our organisation's name changed on the 1st of January 2019 from Western Province Blood Transfusion Service (WPBTS) to the Western Cape Blood Service (WCBS). A new name brings quite a lot of opportunities for new and improved ideas.

The first edition of the youth newsletter came out in June 2012 with the name "All about Youth". What started as a bi-annual printed newsletter, grew into a quarterly newsletter, and was posted to all donors between the ages of 16 and 25. In this newsletter we discuss relevant topics aimed at the youth, feature different educational clinics and keep the youth up to date with all the different youth campaigns.

In 2015 the newsletter changed to a digital platform where our youth donors received an SMS with a link, to view the newsletter on their phone. Last year we introduced email newsletters, and in March 2019 we announced the new name of our youth newsletter called: "YoungBlood".

We cannot emphasise it enough; we need young blood! We need the youth to become blood donors and commit to the cause and in doing so, inspire others to do the same. Hopefully the new newsletter will be as catchy as the ever so popular tune by 5 Seconds of Summer ... "Say you want me, Say you want me, Back in your life". ■



**Got a question?**  
We're on Whatsapp:  
**060 549 7244**

Mon-Fri, 8:00-16:00



# Peer Promoters, one of the best marketing tools

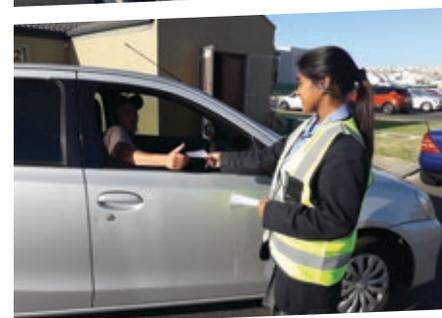
BY MARIKE GEVERS

Wikipedia describes ‘word of mouth’ as the passing of information from person to person by verbal communication. A lot of studies shows that ‘word of mouth’ is one of the most effective types of marketing. Information is just more believable when it comes from your peers. This is also the case when it comes to conveying information about blood donation. Who better to convince the youth to donate blood than the youth themselves?

Peer Promoters are one of the best marketing tools for the Western Cape Blood Service, and that’s why we invest time and money into training these learners. At these interactive training sessions the learners are asked to brainstorm ideas on how to set-up and best promote their blood donation clinics. The learners then get the chance to share their ideas and take notes to use for future clinics.

Some of their brilliant ideas to promote their blood donation clinics were to: create a short video clip to promote your clinic; inter-house competitions; host a blood donation raffle whereby someone can win a hamper; have a Q & A session in class; host a blood donation poster competition and drop flyers in the community to invite them to come and donate. One Peer Promoter also said: “You can play some nice tunes at your clinic to create a nice vibe”.

Thank you Peer Promoters for your great innovative ideas. We are looking forward to seeing them in action. ■



# Standardisation: Our Continued Dedication to Safety

BY CRAIG HICKS

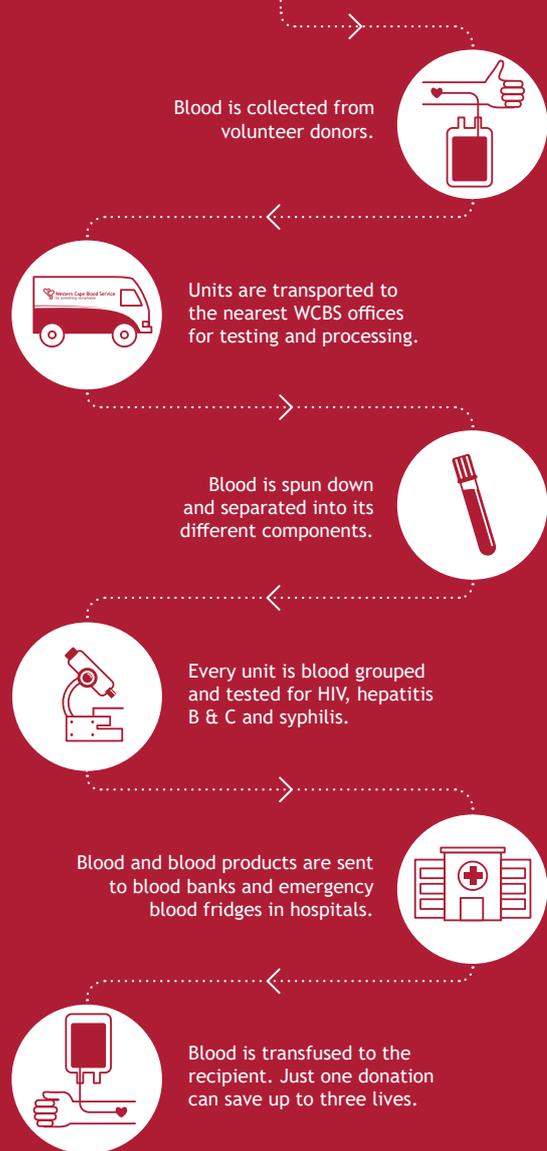
At WCBS our first priority is safety - And that includes the safety of the donor as well as the recipient. In our ongoing quest to provide a safe service to everyone, our clinic department recently implemented new and improved standardisation policies.

These policies provide guidelines for the processes at each blood donation clinic, from the moment the donor arrives and right up until they leave the clinic. These policies include a comprehensive donor interview session, separate stations for each step of the process, and a specifically designed logistical setup which facilitates convenience, flow and of course, donor safety.

When it comes to our educational clinics, we understand that there will always be more questions, more curiosity and more passion than at other clinics and this is where our standardisation policy works really well. Extra staff and separate stations for lengthier interviews mean that we can ask you all the necessary questions AND personally address any queries you might have, no matter how many there are!

We want your experience to be as pleasant, informative and comfortable as possible, and above all be safe for everybody involved, including the recipients! We look forward to seeing you very soon and having a good chat at your next new and improved donation clinic! ■

## Journey of Blood



## Superhero Passport

BY NADIA TURNER

Donating blood at school usually means you don't have to go very far to get to the venue, so why would you need a passport?

Well, at Springfield Convent School, a superhero passport is a different kind of passport altogether. Mrs Nicolette Going, the Donor Representative, together with the Peer Promoter committee, came up with a great idea to make sure that teachers know which learners are out of class donating blood and what lesson they are missing. In this way, those wanting to donate blood don't have to worry about getting into trouble for being out of class and can focus on being a real superhero and saving three lives. ■



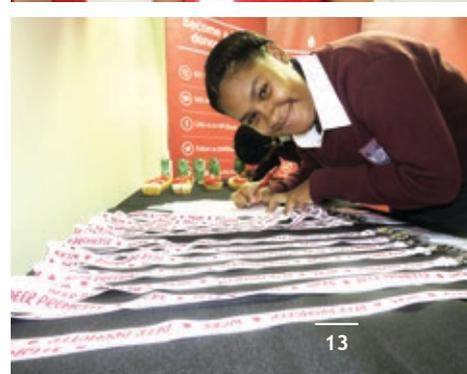
# Open day exhibitions in Worcester

BY CANDICE SINCLAIR

On 19 and 20 February 2019, Worcester Gymnasium High School hosted an open day inviting all prospective students and parents to visit the school. The school's Peer Promoters set up an exhibition stand to inspire and educate new students and parents about the importance of donating blood.

Montana High School in Worcester hosted their annual open day on 20 February 2019. Our Peer Promoter, Angelika Lippert, took it upon herself to arrange an exhibition stand at the school.

The Western Cape Blood Service would like to thank Worcester Gymnasium and Montana High for inviting us to be part of their open days. ■



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

BY IRENE VAN SCHALKWYK



## Save the Humans campaign enlists pets to boost blood donations

A famous cat, an adorable French bulldog, a fluffy duckling, a sloth and a cow are all part of a national 'Save the Humans' campaign launched late 2018 by a network of blood donation centres in the USA. When scrolling through social media, people often pause on pet pictures. Studies done in the UK found that people donate more to charities that benefit animals. With the help of Coby the cat, who has 1.3 million followers on Instagram, in the first two days, 50,000 people liked the cat's video urging people to "Give Blood, Save the Humans." While the campaign is fun, the purpose is serious, and it is hoped that the cute factor in the national campaign will inspire more blood donors. ■

Source: [www.djournal.com/news/local/save-the-humans-campaign-enlists-pets-to-boost-blood-donations/article\\_fa1229d4-acb0-54fb-801c-511c2b486588.html](http://www.djournal.com/news/local/save-the-humans-campaign-enlists-pets-to-boost-blood-donations/article_fa1229d4-acb0-54fb-801c-511c2b486588.html)



## Call the Midwife episode prompts a 46% spike in blood donor registration

A sickle cell disease storyline in an episode from Call the Midwife, a BBC TV show, prompted more people to sign up as donors. The episode saw a doctor and nurse treat a young family affected by a mysterious illness, which was later diagnosed as a devastating genetic blood disorder called sickle cell disease. Most sickle cell patients have an African or Caribbean family background, and as the episode explained, more blood donations from people with a similar ethnic background are needed to help treat the lifelong condition. During the show's broadcast, 46% more people registered as new donors at [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk) than during the same hour the previous day. ■

Source: [www.radiotimes.com/news/tv/2019-04-04/call-the-midwife-blood-donor-increase-sickle-cell-disease/](http://www.radiotimes.com/news/tv/2019-04-04/call-the-midwife-blood-donor-increase-sickle-cell-disease/)

UK | FEBRUARY 2019

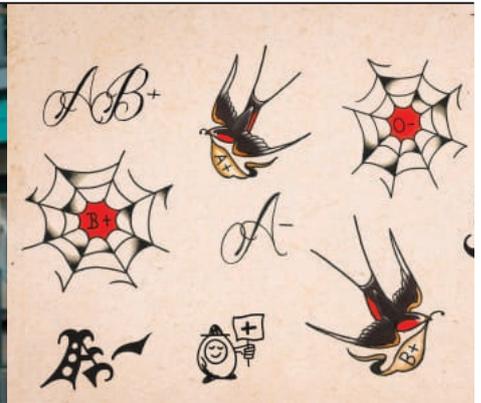
## New blood drop emoji due to hit smartphone keyboards in the spring



Blood donors can soon use their time in the donation chair to let people know they are saving lives - using a new blood drop emoji. The long-awaited red blood drop, which was a successful submission to Unicode from NHS Blood and Transplant along with Plan International UK, is on the list of the new symbol-based text due to hit smartphone keyboards in the Northern hemisphere spring. Blood donors often take to social media in their droves to let their followers know they are giving blood in the hope it will encourage others to follow suit, so it's hoped this emoji will help reinforce the message. Emojis have become part of everyday interaction on social media and in text messages, so it's hoped that those loyal donors who like spreading the word will do it using the new blood drop. ■

Source: [www.news-medical.net/news/20190208/New-blood-drop-emoji-due-to-hit-smartphone-keyboards-in-the-spring.aspx](http://www.news-medical.net/news/20190208/New-blood-drop-emoji-due-to-hit-smartphone-keyboards-in-the-spring.aspx)

FINLAND | MARCH 2019



## Blood-type tattoos remind people that getting inked doesn't mean you can't give blood

People in Finland now have a variety of options available at their local tattoo parlours. The Finnish Red Cross Blood Service created blood type tattoos to battle the misconception that you can't give blood if you've ever been tattooed. That's not true, although there is a waiting period. The Finnish Red Cross

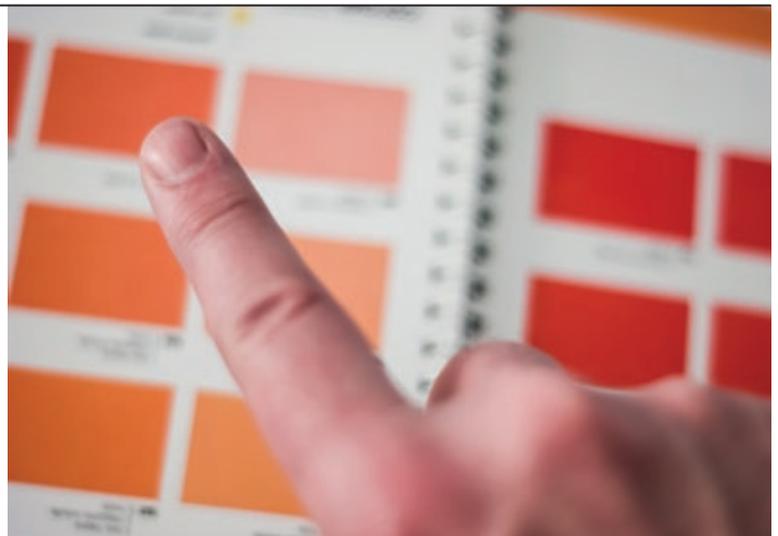
enticed people to try their ink when the organisation sponsored a blood drive offering participants the chance to receive one of their customisable offerings after donating at a local tattoo shop in Helsinki. The organisation says hundreds of people took advantage of the offer, to get one of six pre-drawn designs for each blood

type tattooed for free, prompting it to distribute its templates to shops around the country. ■

Source: [www.fastcompany.com/90324790/these-blood-type-tattoos-reminds-people-that-getting-inked-doesnt-mean-you-cant-give-blood](http://www.fastcompany.com/90324790/these-blood-type-tattoos-reminds-people-that-getting-inked-doesnt-mean-you-cant-give-blood)

USA | DECEMBER 2018

## An app, your fingernail - and anaemia screening is done



Checking for low haemoglobin in the blood - otherwise known as anaemia - usually means drawing blood for testing. But scientists say they've developed a wireless smartphone app that does the same by "reading" a quick photo of your fingernail. The app converts fingernail colours into quick readings of blood haemoglobin levels, according to researchers at Emory University in Atlanta. According to them the technology could be used by anyone at any time, but its use right now is limited to screening, not a formal diagnosis of anaemia. In the study, published in Nature Communications, researchers used data on 237 people - some anaemic, some not - to develop an algorithm that converted

fingernail colour to represent blood haemoglobin levels. It was then tested on 100 patients and proved highly accurate in people with both dark and light skin tones, that's because the nail bed does not contain melanin, which gives skin its colour. Further research, conducted with a variety of patient types, is ongoing. That means the app's sensitivity and accuracy should improve with time. The app could be available for download as soon as March-May 2019, the researchers said. ■

Source: [www.health24.com/Medical/Anaemia/News/an-app-your-fingernail-and-anaemia-screening-is-done-20181212](http://www.health24.com/Medical/Anaemia/News/an-app-your-fingernail-and-anaemia-screening-is-done-20181212)

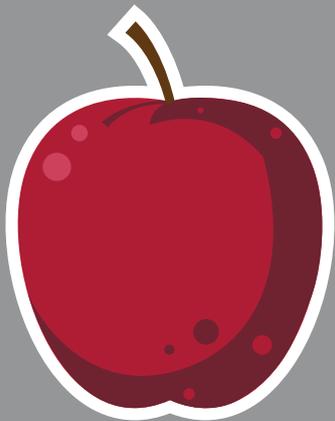
# Basic Donor Criteria



Be between 16 & 75 years old.



Weigh more than 50kg.



Be healthy on the day of donation.



Lead a sexually safe lifestyle.

You can donate blood every 56 days.

It only takes 30 minutes of your time to donate 475ml of whole blood.