

FAQ on High Hemoglobin

1. What is the acceptable range for hemoglobin for blood donors?

Every time you donate blood, we need to make sure that your hemoglobin level is within the acceptable limits that we set for blood donation. The acceptable range for males donating blood is 13.0 g/dl to 18.5 g /dl while for females it is from 12.5 g/dl to 16.5 g/dl.

2. If my hemoglobin is high, what does it mean?

If you are donating blood in Singapore and your hemoglobin level is more than 18.5 g/dl (men) or more than 16.5 g/dl (women), it is considered high, and you will not be allowed to donate. There are many possible reasons for having a high hemoglobin level which includes dehydration, smoking, living at high altitude for a prolonged period, heart, lung, kidney, or bone marrow disease.

3. When can I come back to donate blood?

You can come back to the blood bank after 3 months and we will test your hemoglobin level again. It is advisable to increase your fluid intake before coming to the blood bank so you will not be dehydrated. If you smoke, refraining or cutting down may also help in lowering down your hemoglobin levels.

4. What happens if my hemoglobin is high again on the next visit?

Some of the causes of high hemoglobin are also a cause for donor deferral, either for donor wellbeing or recipient safety. If you have repeatedly high hemoglobin results, you are required to seek consultation with your GP for further evaluation to determine why you have high hemoglobin levels. The memo that your doctor will provide will help us determine if you can continue donating blood.

5. If my doctor cleared me after doing the necessary tests but my hemoglobin is still high, will the blood bank allow me to resume blood donation?

The maximum hemoglobin limit allowed for blood donation is 18.5 g/dl for males and 16.5 g/dl for females. If a donor still has repeatedly high hemoglobin even after being cleared by their doctor, he or she will be permanently deferred. This is because donors with a history of repeatedly high hemoglobin levels have a high chance of having a high hemoglobin if tested again. These donors are hence deferred to avoid repeated failed trips to the blood bank.