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English 1101

17 April 18

Lifesaving Plasma Donations

Donating plasma is more than a way to earn extra income; it helps save lives. Plasma collected from a donor during plasmapheresis is manufactured into plasma protein therapies. Plasma protein therapies are medicines used to treat rare, life-threatening, chronic and genetic diseases. Therefore, it is important to ensure the plasma collected is from healthy donors. Participating in plasmapheresis requires donors to complete a registration, screening, and a physical exam.

Registration is the first step a prospective donor completes to voluntarily participate in plasmapheresis. During registration, the donor must present a valid photo ID, social security card, and provide a physical address within the plasma center's radius. If all documents are acceptable the donor fills out a questionnaire and other relevant paperwork. Afterwards, the donor's information is entered into the computer system by a center employee to finalize registration.

Donors are evaluated by a qualified center employee in a process referred to as screening. Screening consists of obtaining the donor's weight, vital signs, hematocrit, and total protein levels. A fingerstick is performed to collect a small blood sample used for determining the donor's hematocrit and protein levels. Although the donors are evaluated during screening, a more-in depth assessment is performed in a physical exam.

Licensed medical staff are responsible for performing a thorough medical history check, urinalysis and hands-on examination. During this time the donor's understanding of the risks associated with donating plasma, and the blood tests performed is confirmed by asking the donor to read and sign a consent agreement. Once the physical exam is done, the center medical specialist makes the final decision on the donor's eligibility to move forward with plasmapheresis.

Patients that are the recipients of plasma protein therapies understand first-hand the value of plasma donations. Donors must complete a registration, screening, and a physical exam before they can donate. This is important for securing quality plasma and a safe, successful donation for the donor. The purity of the product and the safety of the lifesaving donors is very significant.