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Health and Wellness

My Word

Hannah Draeger Ross

“Blood, Sweat and Beers”

This weeks’ article...yup, it’s about Blood. Blood is a really weird topic for review. Let me give you two other topics to think about in advance of the “Blood” issue.

Mull this over, people get paid (something) to serve jury duty. Citizens are allowed to bring back a little slip of paper and get a pat on the back for sitting on a jury. Yes, this is a very important service, no doubt about it. After all, no one wants to see someone un-fairly sentenced to a prison for a crime they did not commit?

Well how about this scenario...National Guard duty. We all know that our country needs to be protected , we naturally have to send people off for training in case of a foreign enemy invading our land, we need to be on guard. Right? So, the employer *understands* when the employee has to take off to defend his country against possible threat.

How come we can be so understanding of people taking time off for the above mentioned tasks and training and be so weird about people taking off time from work to donate blood or platelets?

You would think in this day and age, telling your employer that there is no evening blood bank open, and you are a platelet donor, would be reasonably accepted. Not really. The statement usually leave this really bewildered look in their eyes like you just asked to take off for the afternoon to drink a case of beer.

I called the Red Cross just last week to ask them why they could not be open more then one week-end every bazillion years? They simply do not have the staff or the money to arrange those extra hours. We just have to make the time.

AND.....we need to drop that dumb fear of donating blood. Example. My granddaughter is a Leukemia survivor. She was kept alive by good old-fashioned blood donated by many different folks. Some wonderful stranger even gave her the ultimate gift of a bone marrow transplant. She started back to school last week after four and one half years of Leukemia. People like “ average Joe you and me” have to support our country in a very special way. Someone like my grandchild does not deserve an unfair sentence, Someone like your Aunt Millie or Cousin Joey don’t deserve to be attacked by a real foreign enemy. Hemophilia, Aids, Anemia, Sickle Cell, Cancer.

We need to do our part and serve in this very important ARM service. A blood donation, (if you squeeze da rubba ball fast) takes on an average about half and hour. A platelet donor is a bit different. The nurse hooks you up to a machine that takes out the blood from one arm and returns the blood minus the platelets into the other arm; Big whoop...this takes about an hour and fifteen minutes. Red Cross sites even have a VCR/TV link so you can watch your latest Mel Gibson flick while donating.

Is it painful?

Honey, my marriages were painful. This is a piece of cake. A little uncomfortable, you may feel a bit chilly, they give you a nice fuzzy blanket. But it all goes fast, then you drink some juice, eat a cookie and you are fine. The miracle is that you have helped another human being stay on the planet.

Still no cigar on the blood thing? Questions often asked.... answered...

#1

Can I get AIDS from giving blood?

You have a greater chance of actually meeting Mel Gibson at the Harris Teeter and having him carry you off down Wendover to the nearest hotel!

#2

I heard people pass out!

Answer: If you weigh sixty-four pounds, suffer from Anemia and look like Alice Cooper, you will not pass the simple little pre-test to become a donor. They will probably offer you some of their blood ([plus some juice and a cookie)

#3

What about Hepatitis?

Answer: What about Titus and Andromeda? You will not get Hepatitis at the blood bank. The screening, the clean needles that are thrown away after one use, do not allow for this kind of error. The days of the old wino guys donating to get money for cheap malt liquor are finite...gone..zip.

Picture this . Your Mom needs blood. You are not her blood type, nobody in your family is. Would you hope for a donor to come along? Or, think about it this way....We all need to know we made a difference while we spin through this life. Please call the Red Cross today at: 1-800-228-1496. You will never regret it.

P.S. On a totally different note. I apologize to all my neighbors for playing "Ain't that a shame" by Cheap Trick eleven times in a row last Saturday morning. I really don't know what came over me. I may have been hypnotized by the drum solo that opens this tune. Sorry neighbors. (I did buy headphones though)