



Travel information for blood donors.

Travel outside the UK can affect giving blood. This is because some infections which may be caught overseas can be spread by blood transfusion.

Travel Questions

We ask the following questions each time you donate:

- Have you been outside the UK in the last 12 months?
- Were you born abroad?
- Have you ever lived or worked abroad?
- Have you ever had any illnesses during or after travel abroad?

Our guidelines change frequently so you must tell us about your travel each time you come to donate.



West Nile Virus

West Nile Virus (WNV) usually causes a mild illness but can cause more serious disease in patients who receive blood.

WNV is found in parts of North America, Europe and Central Asia. If you have travelled to one of these areas between 1st May and 30th November, we will decide if we need to test your donation for WNV. This test is added to the routine tests that we already carry out on all donations, so we don't need to take any extra samples.

Tropical Viruses

Tropical viruses include Dengue Virus, Zika Virus and Chikungunya Virus. These are spread by mosquitoes found in tropical and subtropical regions throughout the world.

If you have travelled to an affected country, we will ask you to wait at least four weeks from your return before giving blood.

Malaria

If you have travelled to a malarial area you are not able to give blood for a year.

If it is over four months since your return, we can take samples to test for antibodies to malaria. We will write to let you know the result of this test within a few weeks. If the result is negative you will be able to give blood as normal, without having to wait a year.



Malarial areas are identified using the best information available. The malaria guidelines for blood donors apply to any donor who has travelled to one of these areas, even if they were advised that they did not need to take anti-malarial medication.

There are different rules if you have lived in a malarial area (for at least 6 months). Please contact us for more advice if this applies to you.



Chagas disease (South American trypanosomiasis)

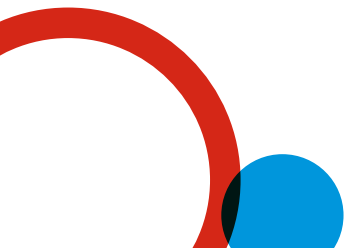
Chagas disease is found in parts of South and Central America. As well as travelers, rules about this infection apply to anyone born (or whose mother was born) in these countries.

Chagas disease is caused by an infection with protozoan parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi* (T. Cruzi). It is a persistent infection that is known to be transmitted by transfusion. At present there is no certain cure for the infection, so anyone who has ever been infected with Chagas disease will continue to be permanently deferred from blood donation.

SNBTS has implemented testing for Chagas disease and should be performed if there is a possibility of infection. Donors who would otherwise be deferred for T. cruzi risk can be offered a T. cruzi antibody test provided that it is at least six months since their last exposure to T. cruzi risk.

Other infections

We keep a close eye on other infections that appear across the world. Sometimes this means we need to introduce new travel rules at short notice.





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