



December 1, 2017

We have important information to share with you about some recent changes in blood donation guidelines. High school blood drives are, without exception, an essential component of the collections strategy for blood centers across the nation. This certainly holds true for Hoxworth Blood Center. We thank you, your colleagues, and your students for supporting our mission.

In addition to optimizing recipient safety, ensuring blood *donor* health is equally important. With that in mind, blood centers are making sure younger blood donors are aware of the importance of iron to their health and steps to improve body iron.



We are reducing the total, annual number of donations allowable for donors aged 16-18 beginning, January 1, 2018.

Iron deficiency is a common finding worldwide and is a potential concern with blood donors because iron is removed with each blood donation. Studies have shown that although iron can be improved by eating a nutritious, well-balanced diet containing foods rich in iron and high in vitamin C, extending the time between blood donations or taking an iron-containing multivitamin or supplement helps ensure that the iron lost by donation will be replaced.

Normal iron levels play a key role in maintaining optimum growth and development.

Rapidly-growing, high school-age blood donors play a very important role in helping make



blood and platelet products available when and where they are needed. Hoxworth Blood Center is working to minimize the impact of iron loss in high school blood donors.

Hoxworth leadership has decided it is prudent to reduce the total annual number of donations individuals aged 16-18 may make in a rolling 12-month period.



FEMALES who are younger than 19-years-old, may make one (1) Whole Blood donation in a 12-month period.



MALES who are younger than 19-years-old, may make two (2) Whole Blood donations or one automated red cell donation in a 12-month period.

These actions are made out of an abundance of caution for the wellbeing of our donors. We are confident this change will further assure there is no deleterious impact on the iron stores of our youngest donors. Our individual blood donor recruiters will collaborate with blood drive coordinators at high schools to review any possible changes, including increased education about the importance of iron and a healthy diet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Tinker".

Jim Tinker
Division Director
Donor Recruitment & Community Relations

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Oh, MD".

David Oh, MD
Chief Medical Officer, Hoxworth Blood Center