What happens to my blood donation after I give?

As soon as a blood donation has been collected at a Nebraska Community Blood Bank donor center or blood drive, it is processed and prepared for patient transfusions—a process that ensures the blood is safe, and the right blood type and product is available for the right patient.

1. **PREPARING YOUR BLOOD**
   After your unit of blood is collected—along with several small vials used for testing—it is labeled and then transported to our component laboratory.

2. **SEPARATING BLOOD COMPONENTS**
   Blood donations are separated into components, including red cells, platelets, and plasma.

3. **TESTING**
   Your blood is typed, which includes identifying its ABO type and a positive or negative Rh factor. Each vial of blood is also tested for safety, including tests for:
   - HBV (Hepatitis B Virus)
   - HCV (Hepatitis C Virus)
   - HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)
   - HTLV (Human T-cell Lymphotropic Virus)
   - Syphilis
   - Unexpected red cell antibodies that may have formed in response to an earlier exposure to blood (e.g., through transfusion or pregnancy)
   - West Nile Virus (WNV)
   - Sickle Cell Trait (performed on donors enrolling in the Sickle Cell Program)
   - Zika Virus

   No blood is released for transfusion without passing the required tests.

4. **STORAGE AND TRANSPORT**
   After your blood has been separated, passed all tests, and properly typed and labeled, it is packed in special temperature-controlled containers.

   It is now ready for distribution to patients, whether as a product ready for transfusion or for manufacture into other life-saving products (like albumin or IVIG-antibodies). Products not needed for transfusion may be used for research or education.

5. **HELPING PATIENTS IN NEED**
   The final step in your blood’s journey is when the donation you made reaches the right patient in need.