



COVID-19 FAQ's

1. Are donor centres still operating?

Yes. Our donor centres remain operational across the country. The situation with the outbreak is constantly changing and we will keep you informed on all issues affecting donors, recipients and the greater South African public.

2. Is it still safe to visit a donor centre to donate blood?

Yes. At the SANBS, we are closely following guidelines issued by the NICD which promote healthy personal hygiene practices – both in our offices and at our fixed and mobile donor centres. We encourage everyone to take the necessary precautions to ensure the safety of fellow citizens. If you are feeling unwell or exhibiting any clinical symptoms of infection (fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat and shortness of breath), you are encouraged to delay donation until you are in good health.

3. Can I still donate blood?

Yes. You can still donate blood if you are feeling healthy to do so. We have, however, put in precautionary deferrals relevant to the following groups of people:

- people who have travelled to affected countries outside of South Africa will be deferred for 21 days,
- people with confirmed cases of Coronavirus infection will be deferred for 28 days from the date of complete clearance of symptoms, and
- people who have been in close contact with confirmed or probable Coronavirus cases will be deferred for 21 days from the last date of contact.

4. Can the virus be contracted through blood?

No. There is presently no evidence that supports that COVID-19 can be transmitted through blood. Individuals are not at risk of contracting COVID-19 through the blood donation or via a blood transfusion process since respiratory viruses are generally not known to be transmittable by donation or transfusion.

5. Can your blood tests detect the virus?

No. Diagnostic testing for COVID-19 is not conducted on blood samples but on throat swabs and sputum samples. For this reason, we do not conduct testing for COVID-19 at our donor centres.

6. What happens to blood if any other infection is detected in my blood?

Should we detect any infections in your blood that are cause for concern, the SANBS will get in touch with you to advise you on the infection and on the appropriate steps to take.

7. Who can I contact for more information?

If you feel you are at risk or fear that you may have been infected with COVID-19, urgently contact the toll-free NICD hotline on 0800 029 999 or on 0800 111 131 which are operational 24 hours a day.

