
POWER IN BLOOD

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Among the many feelings I've experienced during this pandemic is the feeling of helplessness. When the governor closed the schools, I knew things were out of my hands. No matter what power or control I thought I had, it was illustrated to me that I had none. Like many others, all I could do was watch the number of cases and the death toll rise. Daily. I've seen the news stories about the plight of the healthcare workers, the daily stress of the lack of PPE, the lack of ventilators, the overwhelming number of patients and long shifts. I wanted to do something, but didn't know what to do. I saw a commercial about the need for blood donations and decided that it was a small thing, but a big thing. My blood could help someone live.

On Thursday, I gave blood for the first time. I made the appointment on the Red Cross website, ate breakfast, went to work, drank two bottles of water and went for my 1:30pm appointment. When I arrived, someone was there to check my temperature and verify the appointment. I had to answer a series of questions, my finger was pricked to check my hemoglobin, then onto the table. A very friendly and skilled nurse found a vein with one try and within about 10 minutes, a unit of blood filled the pouches hanging at my side. I was shocked to see the amount of blood in a unit. Really, if I had cut myself, and saw that much blood, I might have passed out from the sight! I had to ask -how much blood is that- about a pint (2 cups) I was told. And what happens to it next? She said it would be separated into red cells, platelets and plasma and could save 3 lives. The test tubes would be tested for blood type, multiple diseases, and antibodies (including Covid-19) and I would be able to login to the website in 3 days for the findings. I was amazed at the process and the additional information available at the website. My one unit could help an accident or burn victim, a heart surgery patient, an organ transplant patient, someone battling cancer or Sickle Cell disease. According to the website, about 36,000 units of red blood cells are needed every day in the United States.



As I left, there was an assortment of snacks, and I was encouraged to take something to replenish my strength. I took a pack of mini Oreos, and I ate them without feeling guilty. I was given a sticker that said "Only 3 of 100 donate blood, you are 1." I really did feel good when I left. I felt as if I had begun to do my part in this pandemic. Of course, I would need to become a regular donor, but I didn't feel helpless anymore. Three lives could be saved with my blood.

In my years as a Biology teacher, I taught that blood was a tissue that was pumped through our arteries by the heart, to carry oxygen to all of the body's cells. This is true, but a different book, the Bible says blood is the only thing that can cleanse away sin. (Heb. 9:22) During Old Testament times, people sacrificed animals in order to be forgiven for their sins. In the New Testament, however, God sent His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross that His blood would wash away the sins of all

mankind. My blood may save three physical lives, but the blood of Jesus saves the souls of all humanity. Do you know that believing in Jesus can save your life, too? Do you know that although He died, He was raised from the dead on the third day, and defeated death? Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (Romans 5:9)

Amen!

Stay safe, sanitized, and wear your face mask!

Kim