

Can my dog donate blood?

Donor animals should be between 1 and 8 years of age and in generally good health. Sun States requires that each potential donor complete a **Health Assessment and Release** form. If your dog meets the following criteria, he or she may be a candidate for our blood donation program:

- Dogs over 8 years require vet approval
- Healthy & even-tempered
- Weighs 50 pounds or more (or 35 pounds or more for our "Half Pints" program)
- Current on vaccinations
- No communicable blood-borne diseases

Your pet will be evaluated for cooperativeness, temperament, health, and venous access. If your animal is not willing to donate blood or if your pet does not have good venous access, we will recommend that your companion not donate blood. Sometimes, this is harder on you than your companion. Sun States respects the right for each donor to choose to donate; we recognize and allow non-willing animals the right to refuse donating blood.

The blood donation process is brief and generally involves minimal discomfort. The animal is held by an experienced veterinary technician and a blood collection needle is inserted into the jugular vein in the neck. The process takes about 10 minutes, and animals generally tolerate the procedure well. Sun States does not use sedation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us any time of the day or night.

Call us 24 hours a day

(954) 630-2231

Thank you for giving the gift of life!

Sun States: Blood Banks for Animals



"It's A Dog's Life!"

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Information for Donors and Their Guardians

What to Expect Before, During, and After Your Companion Donates Blood

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Before The Donation

Preparing your animal for blood donation is very simple.

- Your pet can eat a normal breakfast beforehand.
- You should be sure that they are well hydrated before donating blood, i.e. allow them to have *plenty* of water before they donate blood.
- A small area will be shaved on your companion's neck where the collection will be taken. The area will be prepared with a non-irritating sterile scrub.
- Your companion will be offered lots of treats, kisses, head scratches and hugs giving them time to relax and prepare for the donation.

During The Donation

Guardians are welcome to participate in the blood collection process. We recommend however that if you are bothered by the sight of blood to excuse yourself from the donation area. This will ensure your own safety and the safety of your companion should you have a negative reaction to the sight of blood.

- Your companion will be firmly and lovingly held by an experienced technician. They work closely with the phlebotomist to help position your companion for the safest, quickest, and most comfortable collection.

- Approximately half way through the donation process, your companion may experience what we call the “half way wiggle.” This is normal. The technician will maintain a firm and loving hold on your companion, allowing the phlebotomist time to finish collecting the donation. In a minute or two, your companion will relax and the wiggling will end.
- Within a period of 7 – 10 minutes, the blood collection is complete. The collection needle is withdrawn, and gauze is placed over the collection site. The technician will hold off the neck for 5 minutes to ensure the site does not bleed.
- A wrap may be placed around your companion's neck to keep gauze in place and maintain slight pressure on the site.

After The Donation

Your companion will be praised and thanked for giving the gift of life.

- They will be offered lots of water, treats, kisses, and love. Throughout the rest of the day, please have plenty of fresh water available for them to drink.
- A follow up call will be placed by our staff within 24 hours. Our staff will be happy to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have.
- Most dogs do not experience any adverse donor reactions. Your companion will be assessed prior to being released to ensure donor health and safety.

- Your companion will self-regulate their physical activity. Most donors experience no reduction in activity or appetite. Some may display a reduction in activity; this is temporary and should last no more than 24 hours.
- We always offer water to our donors after a donation. In rare instances, additional fluids will be offered to your companion for those that may have a special need. Fluids will be given as determined by the staff.
- On occasion, the area of the collection site may develop minor swelling. This is called a hematoma. The swelling will disappear in a couple of days. If the site bleeds, you can apply direct pressure to the area to stop the bleeding.
- On rare occasions some dogs may develop a “hot spot” at the collection site. Most often this happens to dogs who have a history of developing hot spots before. Should this happen, please consult your veterinarian for methods of treatment or call the blood bank for assistance.
- Within 24 hours of donating blood, please do not apply force to the neck, i.e. walking the dog with a collar around the neck. This may cause the collection site to begin bleeding. We recommend walking them with a harness or “Tarzan” style.
- If you would like to receive copies of blood work and infectious disease reports, please call us and we'll be happy to send you or your veterinarian copies for your companion's file.