

WHAT IS 'BLOOD TYPE'?

Blood typing is done in a laboratory, where a set of standard tests is performed to determine a person's ABO type and his or her Rh blood group system.

A person's ABO blood type – A, B, AB or O – is based on the presence or absence of the A and B antigens. Antigens cause the body to launch an immune response through the production of antibodies. The A blood type has only the A antigen, and the B blood type has only the B antigen. The AB blood type has both A and B antigens, and the O blood type has neither A nor B antigen.

Within the Rh system, the only antigen for which screening tests are done is the D antigen. If the D antigen is present, that person is Rh positive. If the D antigen is absent, that person is Rh negative.

WHAT ARE THE BLOOD TYPES?

According to the American Association of Blood Banks, distribution of blood types in the U.S. includes the following:

- O Rh-positive: 38 percent
- A Rh-positive: 34 percent
- B Rh-positive: 9 percent
- AB Rh-positive: 3 percent
- O Rh-negative: 7 percent
- A Rh-negative: 6 percent
- B Rh-negative: 2 percent
- AB Rh-negative: 1 percent

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR ME TO KNOW MY BLOOD TYPE?

Personal blood type is something every informed health care consumer should know.

During emergencies it is especially important that you, or someone accompanying you, knows your blood type.

While emergency workers take many precautions with blood transfusions, that extra measure of safety – knowing your blood type – can help ensure you don't receive the wrong type of blood. Being transfused with the wrong blood type can cause immediate harmful reactions as well as long-term health problems.

*For more information regarding the services provided by the Pathology Center,
call (402) 354-4541 or (888) 432-8980.*

Test Direct is a program of the Methodist Hospital Pathology Center, an accredited member of the College of American Pathologists and the American Association of Blood Banks. The Methodist Hospital Pathology Center is also licensed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services under CLIA.

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