

# Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service adjusts haemoglobin requirement for blood donation and launches "Iron Feast 2.0" video series to boost iron levels for donors (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) announced today (May 21) that, starting from May 27 the haemoglobin level requirement of blood donors will be adjusted. For female donors, the range will be adjusted from the current range of 11.5 to 16.5 grams per decilitre (g/dL) to 12.0 to 16.5g/dL, while the male requirement will remain at 13.0 to 18.0g/dL. The above adjustment was endorsed by the Hospital Authority (BTS) Expert Panel on Blood and Products Safety. The BTS has been keeping track of the haemoglobin levels of blood donors, and various public education programmes are in place to promote the importance of iron replenishment in order to safeguard the well-being of blood donors.

Haemoglobin, found in red blood cells, is responsible for transporting oxygen throughout the human body. Iron is an essential component for haemoglobin production. After each blood donation, a certain amount of red blood cells are lost, making the replenishment of iron crucial for regular donors.

According to the Thematic Report on Iron Status by the Department of Health in 2024, women have a higher prevalence of iron deficiency than men. The BTS agrees with this finding and is stepping up support on the education of iron replenishment. Recently, the BTS launched the "Iron Feast 2.0" video series, aiming to encourage the public to absorb sufficient iron in their daily diets and to develop balanced and healthy eating habits, thus enhancing their iron levels.

The BTS has been promoting public education on iron replenishment for the past decade. Oral iron supplements are distributed to donors after their blood donation to boost haemoglobin levels. The Chief Executive and Medical Director of the BTS, Dr Lee Cheuk-kwong, said "After years of dedicated efforts in public education, the average haemoglobin level for donors has increased. The number of people deferred from donating blood due to low haemoglobin levels has significantly decreased from nearly 40 000 instances in 2015 to just over 10 000 instances in 2024."

The public can view the "Iron Feast 2.0" video series on the BTS's social media platforms and website (<https://www5.ha.org.hk/rcbts/iron-feast>).

The BTS website and the "HK Blood" mobile app also provide relevant information on iron replenishment. The BTS invites members of the public to continue donating blood and become regular blood donors. Donors are advised to make appointments via the "HK Blood" mobile app or by calling the BTS's donor centres. For more details, please visit [www.ha.org.hk/rcbts](http://www.ha.org.hk/rcbts).

