

SICKLE CELL DISEASE AND THE NEED FOR BLOOD DONOR RECRUITMENT GUIDE

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WHAT IS SICKLE CELL DISEASE?

Sickle cell disease (SCD) is an inherited blood disorder that affects millions of people globally and is most prevalent in people whose ancestors are from sub-Saharan Africa, South America, the Caribbean, Central America, Saudi Arabia, India, and Mediterranean countries(1).

The Sickle Cell Disease Association of Canada (SCDAC) estimates that **approximately 6000 people in Canada live with SCD**, and most are of African ancestry.

DID YOU KNOW? There is NO universal cure for SCD.

Many people with SCD need blood transfusions or red blood cell exchange as part of their treatment plan. The closer the blood type match between the donor and recipient, the better the health outcome for the person with SCD.

WHY DONATE?

- 1 Blood antigens are inherited. A Black person with SCD is more likely to find a close blood type match from someone with similar ancestry.
- 2 Only about 1% of blood donors in Canada identify as Black.
- 3 To contribute to improving the health outcomes of people living with SCD, we need more blood donors, especially donors of African ancestry.

In our study with Black young adults in Canada, we asked them what they liked and didn't like in blood donor recruitment materials. Here's what we found:

DO

- Be clear and concise.
- Explain the need for blood for people with SCD.
- Explain the relationship between blood-type match and ancestry.
- Share a personal story.
- Representation matters: show pictures of people you want to recruit in your materials.
- Use graphics, figures, and images.
- Put materials where the target audience is (e.g., churches, mosques, barber shops, hair saloons, etc.)
- Share on social media channels used by Black young adults.
- Ask people to donate blood and explain the process of donation.
- Direct people to Canadian Blood Services' and Hema-Quebec's donor eligibility webpage.

DON'T

- Use acronyms with no explanation.
- Use too much text.
- Make things complicated.
- Assume SCD is a "Black disease"

SCAN QR CODES FOR MORE INFORMATION



Sickle Cell Disease Association of Canada (SCDAC)

Canadian Blood Services