



The blood bank at the DMV Center: Saving lives one unit at a time!

The blood bank at the DMV Center was established in 1997. Since that time, the number of blood units collected and administered has increased exponentially! The method of collection, monitoring of the donor's health, safety of the product and administration have been perfected. We will now rarely administer whole blood, but rather split the unit immediately after collection to produce component therapy that will best respond to the patient needs. This also allows us to optimize this precious resource. Our patients will then typically receive either packed red blood cells and/or plasma (fresh frozen or frozen) according to their specific needs.

Blood transfusions will save hundreds of dogs and cats lives per year. Anemia or severe blood loss are the main reasons for packed red blood cells transfusions. Many health problems can cause anemia, such as immune-mediated hemolytic anemia (IMHA), lack of production of blood cells from the bone marrow, or infection with a blood parasite (like *Mycoplasma haemofelis*). Severe hemorrhage can be caused by trauma, surgical intervention, a ruptured mass, etc. In addition to large amount of intravenous fluids, transfusions of multiple blood units may be necessary. Plasma transfusions are usually indicated for correction of certain clotting disorders. Rat poison ingestion, liver failure, and severe sepsis are good examples of patients that require plasma administration. Other more specialized products may also be administered, such as cryoprecipitate for dog affected by Von Willebrand's disease.



Vanessa Turcot-Lamarche, TSA certifiée





In order to save all those lives, we obviously need healthy volunteers, and their parents to drive them to the Veterinary Center in Lachine to donate! According to demand, animals may donate every 2 to 3 months, or less. The visit lasts about one hour. The animal is examined by a veterinarian, and his red blood cells level is tested. The blood collection itself takes about 10 to 15 minutes. Cats need to be anesthetized, but dogs are routinely not sedated for the

donation. Therefore, only very cooperative and calm dogs and friendly cats are admitted to be donors. There is a whole complimentary health program that comes with being a blood donor. Each donation saves multiple lives, and these animals are true heroes!

If you wish to get further information about the DMV Center blood bank, please contact Vanessa Turcot-Lamarche, 514 633-8888, ext. 233 or vturcot@centredmv.com.

In collaboration with Dr. Valérie Sauvé, DMV, Dipl. ACVECC