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TYRE SAFETY TALK



Adam Gosling

Adam Gosling heads up the team at TyreSafe Australia. Considering tyres holistically we help clients turn higher profits. Tyres reflect the whole operation, they don't tell lies. Transport and mining companies benefit from our tyre experience. If your tyres aren't turning, they're not earning! ©Tyresafe.com.au



Donating blood is giving the gift of life to someone you don't know. The donation process requires only a little of your time. But, in doing so, you give time to someone less fortunate to live another day. Some times that someone could be one of your own loved ones

THE GIFT OF LIFE

In this column I'm talking about something completely different, something that many of us may not have even considered; but to my way of thinking, it is very worthy of consideration.

I have been fortunate to enjoy good health; sure there's been the bout of flu or suchlike, but by and by I've been healthy.

I often wonder about those less fortunate, those whose lives are just stricken by sickness. A work colleague in days' past was diagnosed with leukaemia; he made it through somehow. I know lot of you will have similar stories.

Alas, it is not just from sickness that results in the requirement for blood products.

A lack of appropriate pressure and maintenance for the humble tyre that supports our societies all around the globe without question is often the root cause for vehicle-related traffic accidents. Unless tyres are appropriately inflated they are unsafe. Just as humans require blood to be healthy so a pneumatic tyre requires the appropriate volume of air to provide service when called upon.

For me, losing my mother from cancer was difficult; the loss prompted me to consider donating my blood to help someone else survive. I've done so for 30 something years now, not quite as frequently as I'd wished or hoped. Travel to regions where malaria is prevalent slows down my donation rate as

donations have been postponed to ensure the blood supply quality is maintained at the highest possible levels. Sickness or other such factors do contribute to a lower donation rate, I wish I'd been able to give more to those who need.

In my country, Australia, one in three people will require a blood related product in their life time; yet only one in thirty actually donate. Modern medicine has come on in leaps and bounds since the days of leaches. Blood is made up of red blood cells and platelets suspended in a fluid known as plasma. Plasma is a powerful and versatile part of human blood containing very important proteins, nutrients and clotting factors that support our immune system, and it helps to control excessive bleeding. One very important protein in human blood plasma is immunoglobulin or Ig. Ig is used to make life giving treatments that protect against serious infections and autoimmune diseases. The demand for this product, immunoglobulin, has been growing faster than other blood products.

I was at my dentist recently when I had another opportunity to learn how fortunate I am. I asked my dentist whether the filling replacement was going to require any blood work, that is cutting into my gums or nerves. "No" was the response quickly followed by "Why do you ask?" I explained that the following week I was donating platelets instead of just plasma. If there was any exposure to blood, I'd not be able to donate. Platelets are a subset of the blood cells, used in treatment of cancer; there are also clotting agents in platelets. The donation procedure requires me to be hooked up to a machine for just under two hours to harvest the platelets from my blood. The dentist started to thank me profusely and quickly adding, "My five-year-old granddaughter is undergoing chemotherapy for a cancer she can't see or even really understand." I hadn't actually connected directly with someone who needed blood products before. Here was a grandparent working to assist her family to support a child who would not have much time left without treatment.

Donating blood requires only a little of your time. There is no financial outlay to give a gift of life to someone you don't know. Not everyone can donate blood, there are some blood groups that are sought after more than others and people who have lived in certain places cannot ever donate due to the potential of disease transmission. As I mentioned, potential exposure to malaria is a count against blood donation. For those of you who may be able to donate but think to yourselves "I don't have time..." or find other such reasons, I urge you to think about someone

that needs a blood product who "doesn't have much time left without a blood product they need." You never know whether that "someone" could be one of your loved ones.

I understand that some readers may find this topic hard to understand or it may even be against their personal philosophies. I have no issue with personal choice. For me, the personal choice in donating my blood, plasma or platelets is that I can help someone to live another day, to enjoy their health no matter how good or bad it may be. For me to be able to gift another chance of life is something I can do without any hesitation. I hope that one day, if I need the same, someone will be out there thinking like me.

For those of you who do enjoy good health and have no philosophical disagreements, I encourage you to consider talking with the Red Cross Blood Service or relevant organisation that operates a blood service in your region. They will help you ascertain whether you can donate. You will then be able to provide a gift of life, passing forward your good health to someone less fortunate.

The donation process takes only your time and in doing so you give time to those who may not have much left.

As a company director, we provide our people with paid time during business hours to attend a blood donation. It is another way we can say thank you and give back to the community. I'm proud to say that in my company, the staff members who are unable to donate are happy to support their colleagues who are donating; that is their contribution, it is a team effort. There are never any judgements of those who are not eligible as they help in other ways.

The Tyre and Rubber industry is a global industry. As an industry, we can promote the process of gifting life by donating a little of our time and blood so that those less fortunate can enjoy what we take for granted. Directors, CEOs and Managers, I ask you to provide your employees an opportunity to give blood and encourage them by giving the time off without any deduction in their usual income. The Blood Banks maintain registers of the company (if they wish to register) which employs the donor. A friendly competition between groups is a great way of highlighting your employee's gift to those needing blood products.

I appeal to each and every one of you reading this column to consider how the organisation that provides you with good financial health can offer those less fortunate in health an opportunity to live another day.

All that is required is just a little of your time to give someone the gift of life, your blood. ■

The Tyre and Rubber industry people can promote the process of gifting life by donating a little of their time and blood so that those less fortunate in health get an opportunity to live for another day