



Gift of life recipient gives back at clinic

David Fleischer

Published on Jun 12, 2008

Visitors to the Canadian Blood Services clinic at Hillcrest Mall Monday had a rare chance to see the difference their donations make.

Eleven-year-old Kavina Pecile personally thanked donors and served them peach or orange juice once they were done.

The Aurora girl was only six when she was diagnosed with leukemia. For the past two years, she has been healthy and free of the need for chemotherapy, but that came after years of treatments, including nine blood transfusions.

"There were times we were told that we might have to wait, there wasn't enough blood and that's scary," said her mother, Pina.

Kavina remembered her mother taking her straight from the bathtub down to Sick Kids after receiving a call from their family doctor.

"When she was first diagnosed, she had something like 10 platelets, which is unheard of... she was pale, pale, pale," Ms Pecile said.

Platelets help your blood to clot and around 150 is considered a normal count.

Kavina also recalled visits to Camp Oochegeas, a summer camp for children with cancer, as a positive experience during her illness.

Over the past few years, she has helped out at World Blood Donor day and other events.



Aurora's Kavina Pecile, 11, visited the Canadian Blood Services clinic at Hillcrest Mall Monday to personally thank donors. She was six when she was diagnosed with leukemia and has had nine blood transfusions.

"People donate blood and they know how it's used, but they don't really see it," Ms Pecile said.

A steady stream of donors visited the four beds at the Hillcrest clinic Monday.

One such donor was Thornhill's Dave Patriarche, who gives blood every 56 days.

He pointed to Kavina and others in need as the reason why.

"We've had lots of incidents around us, and somebody's gotta do it," he said.

York Central Hospital is lucky to have a fairly steady supply of blood, said Goretta LaFond, technical specialist of the hospital's transfusion medicine lab.

At any given time, the hospital has 120 to 150 units of blood red cells and another 50 to 60 units of frozen plasma, she said.

On Sept. 26, CBS celebrates its 10th anniversary as the national organization managing the blood supply for all of Canada, except Quebec.

National Blood Donor Week continues until June 15.

You can find information on donating and book appointments by visiting www.bloodservices.ca or calling 1-888-2-DONATE.

By the numbers:

452% — Number of Canadians who have needed blood for themselves or a family member.

428% — Number of Canadians who intend to donate blood.

43.7% — Number of Canadians who actually donate blood.

441 — Permanent Canadian Blood Services clinics in Canada, including one in York Region at Hillcrest Mall.