

 **Canada's Lifeline:** Our frontline



**I enjoy being counted on.**

Read more at [blood.ca/stories](https://blood.ca/stories)

**Damon,**  
Canadian Blood Services  
driver in London, ON



*During the COVID-19 pandemic, we're bringing you stories of our employees who continue to work on the front lines. Damon Gyurics is a driver based in London who transports blood products and supplies.*

When I joined Canadian Blood Services more than five years ago it was a toss-up between different job openings. I'd worked for years in home care and even won patient care awards, so I could do well as a phlebotomist (the people who draw blood from donors.) But in the end I applied and joined as a driver and I'm really happy with my decision.

I'm on the road a lot between London and Brampton. We get finished blood products for hospitals in our area from our state-of-the-art facility in Brampton. That's where blood donations from much of Ontario are processed and tested. I also pick up supplies there for our local donor centres.

---

## 'I feel like a superhero'

---

I mainly work the night shift which starts at midnight. Every now and then my alarm goes off at quarter past 11 p.m. and I think, 'Why did I say yes to this?' But then I get up, and right away I'm feeling like 'Woo-hoo! Let's go!' I feel like a superhero leaving my headquarters, heading out into the world. I'm alone on that shift mostly and bring back everything we need from Brampton. I'm being counted on, and I enjoy being counted on.

It's usually other drivers who deliver to hospitals, but I do a couple of deliveries on Saturdays. With the pandemic the routine has changed a bit. Because of COVID-19 screening I can't just

enter by the door that's closest to the blood bank. I have to check in at the door where screening is being done and walk through the hospital. But no, it doesn't make me nervous. I've spent a lot of time in hospitals for work and I feel more assured than I did when I first started in healthcare.

---

## **'You can be excited by the chance to solve problems'**

---

At home I'm lucky to have my wife and two older children at home with me. My wife's birthday is coming up so the kids and I have been planning a kind of simulated night out at the theatre. We have to think outside the box but that's the sort of thing that makes memories. You can be obsessed with problems, or you can be excited by the chance to solve those problems.

I am very careful to protect my health these days because my job takes me into two different facilities. I would never want to be the source of outbreaks in two workplaces. I'm taking extra care to keep the inside of my truck clean, and keeping good personal hygiene habits.

Distancing myself from my colleagues when I do meet up is important. It's an adjustment because I'm normally a friendly, hands-on sort of person. I do worry that when the pandemic is over people will keep the habit of not shaking hands or not giving others a pat on the shoulder. Also, if you're wearing a mask, nobody knows you're smiling at them. So will people just get used to not smiling anymore? Hopefully that will come around because a smile does so much. A smile is just as infectious as COVID-19.