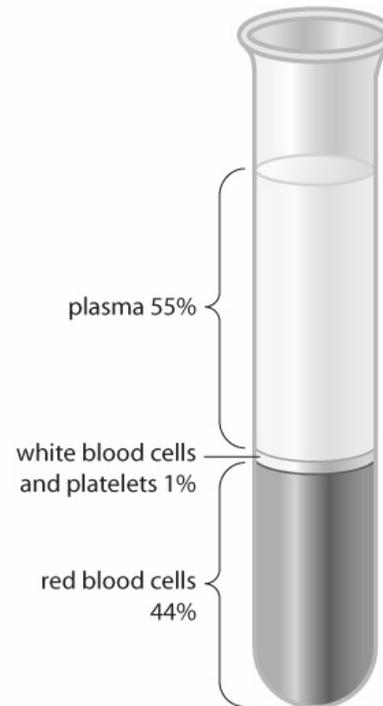


The three main components of blood can be separated using a special medical device called a blood centrifuge. When the blood is separated, it briefly settles into layers, as shown here.



Point of comparison	Red blood cells	White blood cells		
		Granulocytes and monocytes	Lymphocytes	Platelets
<b>Origin</b>	red bone marrow	red bone marrow	thymus, red bone marrow	red bone marrow, lungs
<b>Cells present per mm<sup>3</sup> of blood (approximate)</b>	5 500 000 (male) 4 500 000 (female)	6000	2000	250 000
<b>Relative size</b>	small (8 µm diameter)	largest (up to 25 µm)	large (10 µm)	smallest (2 µm)
<b>Function</b>	to carry oxygen and carbon dioxide to and from cells	to engulf foreign particles	to play a role in the formation of antibodies (defence function)	to play a role in the clotting of blood (defence function)
<b>Life span</b>	120 days	a few hours to a few days	unknown	2–8 days
<b>Appearance</b>				