

American Red Cross Issues Emergency Call for Blood Donors Now

Written by Ben Corey
Monday, 25 June 2012 09:45

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Blood and platelet donors of all types needed

PEORIA, Ill. (June 25, 2012) – The American Red Cross blood supply has reached emergency levels with 50,000 fewer donations than expected in June. This shortfall leaves the Red Cross with half the readily available blood products on hand now than this time last year.

The Red Cross is calling on all eligible blood donors – now more than ever – to roll up a sleeve and give as soon as possible. All blood types are needed, but especially O positive, O negative, B negative and A negative in order to meet patient demand this summer.

An unseasonably early start to spring may be a contributing factor to this year's decrease in donations. Many regular donors got an early start on summer activities and aren't taking time to give blood or platelets. In addition, this year's mid-week Independence Day holiday has reduced the number of scheduled Red Cross blood drives. Many sponsors, especially businesses, are unable to host drives because employees are taking extended vacations.

Unfortunately, patients don't get a holiday from needing blood products. The need is constant. Every two seconds, someone in the United States needs a blood transfusion. Blood and platelets are needed for many different reasons, including accident and burn victims, heart surgery patients, organ transplant patients, premature babies – when there are complications during childbirth – and for patients receiving treatment for leukemia, cancer or sickle cell disease.

“Every day, the Red Cross must collect more than 17,000 pints of blood for patients at more than 3,000 hospitals and transfusion centers across the country. Of that, the Heart of America Blood Services Region must collect approximately 500 pints per day,” said Shelly Heiden, CEO of the American Red Cross Heart of America Blood Services Region, serving Illinois, Eastern Iowa and parts of Missouri. “We need donors to make appointments in the coming days and weeks to help us ensure that all patient blood needs can be met. Each pint of whole blood can help save more than one life.”

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“There is always the chance that a physician could postpone an elective surgery if the needed blood products aren’t readily available or, in a worst case scenario, have to forego a more serious procedure because of a shortage of blood,” Heiden added. “Our goal is to ensure that doesn’t happen.”

Call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit redcrossblood.org to make an appointment or for more information. A blood donor card or driver’s license, or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age (16 with parental permission in some states), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

About the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies more than 40 percent of the nation’s blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or join our blog at blog.redcross.org.

The American Red Cross’ Live Life. Give Life. summer-long campaign is helping to raise awareness

about the constant need for blood and encourage regular donations. Presenting donors between May

21 and September 5, 2012 will be entered automatically into the Live Life. Give Life. promotion for

a chance to win prize packages from GiftCertificates.com. And, from June 29 to July 8, presenting

donors will be entered to win additional prize certificates to thank them for giving blood around the

Independence Day holiday. Visit redcrossblood.org/GiveWin to learn more.

Upcoming Blood Donation Opportunities:

CARROLL COUNTY

6/29/2012, 12:00 pm- 6:00 pm, United Methodist Church, 405 E. Locust, Lanark

CLINTON COUNTY

7/13/2012, 2:00 pm- 6:00 pm, American Red Cross, 1220 13th Avenue North, Clinton

HENRY COUNTY

6/25/2012, 1:00 pm- 4:00 pm, Courtyard Village, 860 Sunset Dr, Kewanee

6/27/2012, 2:00 pm- 6:00 pm, First Christian Church, 105 Dwight St., Kewanee

7/2/2012, 12:00 pm- 6:00 pm, First United Methodist Church S Campus Bldg, 224 N. State,

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Geneseo

7/2/2012, 12:00 pm- 6:00 pm, St. John's Church, Route 17, Woodhull

7/9/2012, 2:00 pm- 6:00 pm, St John's Vianney Church, 313 S West Street, Cambridge

7/11/2012, 2:00 pm- 6:00 pm, First Christian Church, 105 Dwight St., Kewanee

MERCER COUNTY

7/2/2012, 2:00 pm- 6:00 pm, Alexis Community Center, 204 W. Palmer Ave., Alexis

WHITESIDE COUNTY

6/26/2012, 1:00 pm- 5:15 pm, Old Fulton Fire Station, 912 4th Street, Fulton

6/27/2012, 10:00 am- 2:00 pm, Rock Falls Blood Donation Center, 112 W. Second St., Rock Falls

6/28/2012, 4:00 pm- 7:00 pm, Rock Falls Blood Donation Center, 112 W. Second St., Rock Falls

7/3/2012, 2:00 pm- 6:00 pm, Rock Falls Blood Donation Center, 112 W. Second St., Rock Falls

7/3/2012, 8:00 am-11:00 am, Old Fulton Fire Station, 912 4th Street, Fulton

7/10/2012, 1:00 pm- 5:15 pm, Old Fulton Fire Station, 912 4th Street, Fulton

7/10/2012, 10:00 am- 2:00 pm, Carlson Acupuncture & Chiropractic, 2317 E. Lincolnway, Sterling

7/11/2012, 10:00 am- 2:00 pm, Rock Falls Blood Donation Center, 112 W. Second St., Rock Falls

7/11/2012, 10:00 am- 2:00 pm, Halo Branded Solutions, 1980 Industrial Drive, Sterling

7/12/2012, 3:00 pm- 8:00 pm, Tampico United Methodist Church, 202 Lincoln Ave, Tampico

7/14/2012, 6:30 am-12:00 pm, CGH Medical Center, 100 E. LeFevre Road, Sterling

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