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RedCrossBlood.org

Red Cross: Urgent need for blood donations as hospital demand increases

T-shirts, \$5 Amazon.com Gift Cards offered to thank all those who come to give

DEDHAM, Mass., (May 27) — The American Red Cross has an urgent need for blood donations to prevent another blood shortage as hospitals resume surgical procedures and patient treatments that were temporarily paused earlier this spring in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Healthy individuals who are feeling well are asked to make an appointment to donate in the weeks and months ahead by downloading the free [Red Cross Blood Donor App](#), visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](#), calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or enabling the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device.

In recent weeks, hospital demand for blood products has grown by 30% after sharply declining in early April amid this rapidly changing and complex public health crisis. At the same time, blood drives continue to be canceled as many businesses and community organizations remain closed. Donors are needed to make and keep scheduled appointments to help meet the current need.

All those who come to give through May 31 will receive a special Red Cross T-shirt by mail, while supplies last. And thanks to Amazon, all those who come to give June 1-30 will receive a \$5 Amazon.com Gift Card via email.*

“Blood donors have played a vital role in the lives of patients who have needed lifesaving transfusions during this pandemic, and patients continue to depend on donors each and every day,” said Paul Sullivan, senior vice president, Red Cross Blood Services. “The Red Cross appreciates the support of those who rolled up a sleeve to give in recent months, but the need doesn’t stop. We need the public’s help to avoid another blood shortage this summer.”

It’s important to remember that red blood cells must be transfused within 42 days of donation and platelets within just five days. So, they must constantly be replenished. There is no known end date in this fight against coronavirus, and the Red Cross urgently needs the help of donors and blood drive hosts to ensure blood products are readily available for patients.

Blood drive safety precautions

Each Red Cross blood drive and donation center follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and [additional precautions](#) – including temperature checks, social distancing and face coverings for donors and staff – have been implemented to ensure the health of all those in attendance. Donors are asked to schedule an appointment prior to arriving at the drive and are required to wear a face covering or mask while at the drive, in alignment with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention public guidance.

About blood donation

All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. 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 in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), 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.

Blood and platelet donors can save time at their next donation by using RapidPass® to complete their pre-donation reading and health history questionnaire online, on the day of their donation, before arriving at the blood drive. To get started, follow the instructions at [RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](#) or use the Blood Donor App.

About the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% 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 [cruzrojaamericana.org](#), or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](#).

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* Restrictions apply. Additional information and details are available at [RedCrossBlood.org/Together](#).