

Media Contact: Meg Rossman
Telephone: (716) 327-1178
meg.rossmanleblanc@redcross.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Emergency blood shortage: Red Cross supply drops 25%

*Donors urged to give as extreme heat, travel plans threaten already low blood levels
\$20 Amazon.com Gift Card by email for coming to give in August*

BUFFALO, Aug. 5, 2024 — The American Red Cross is experiencing an emergency blood shortage as the nation faces dangerous levels of heat and people head out for final summer travel plans. Since July 1, the Red Cross national blood supply has fallen by more than 25%, and blood donors of all types, especially those with type O blood, are urged to give as soon as possible to help patients receive lifesaving medical care.

Heat impacted more than 100 blood drives in July in nearly every state where the Red Cross collects blood – compounding other seasonal obstacles to blood donation, such as travel and summer activities. Together these factors contributed to a shortfall of more than 19,000 blood donations in July. At the same time, hospital demand for blood products remains strong. **Blood products are being sent to hospitals faster than donations are coming in. Right now, type O inventory is so low, distributions of this vital blood type are reduced below what hospitals count on.**

“It’s critical hospitals have both type O positive and O negative blood ready to go for patients in the most life-threatening situations,” said Dr. Eric Gehrie, executive physician director for the Red Cross. “Type O is especially important for victims of accidents and other trauma who are receiving emergency treatment. Now is the time for donors of all blood types to give and ensure hospital shelves can be restocked before any impact to patient care.”

The Red Cross is working with hospitals around-the-clock to meet the blood needs of patients – but can’t do it alone. To make an appointment, download the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

As a thank-you, those who come give blood, platelets or plasma Aug. 1-31, 2024, will get a \$20 Amazon.com Gift Card by email. For details, visit RedCrossBlood.org/Help.

Who donations help

Juanita McClain, the president of Sickle Cell Warriors of Buffalo knows firsthand how important a readily available blood supply is, having received multiple blood transfusions as part of a lifelong battle with Sickle Cell Disease. From birth until the time she was in her early twenties McClain, a mother, author and educator, estimates that she was in the hospital to receive treatment for Sickle Cell on an almost monthly basis – receiving multiple blood transfusions, surgeries and much more. McClain has gone on to serve as an advocate not only for herself, but her fellow warriors with the founding of the Buffalo chapter of Sickle Cell Warriors, helping to raise awareness for the genetic blood disorder that affects more than 100,000 patients across the United States and the importance blood donation plays in treatment.

You can learn more about Juanita McClain and her Warrior story [here](#).

Upcoming blood donation opportunities Aug. 5-31:

Niagara

Lewiston

8/7/2024: 1:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Lewiston Fire Co. No.1, Lewiston Fire Co. No. 1, 145 N 6th St

Lockport

8/13/2024: 12 p.m. - 6 p.m., The Dale Association Incorporated, 33 Ontario St.

8/21/2024: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m., South Lockport Fire Company Inc, South Lockport Fire Hall, 5666 Transit Rd

Newfane

8/19/2024: 12:30 p.m. - 6 p.m., Newfane Town Hall Community Center, 2737 Main Street

Niagara Falls

8/17/2024: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., St John de LaSalle, 8477 Buffalo Ave.

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides comfort to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; distributes international humanitarian aid; and supports veterans, military members and their families. The Red Cross is a nonprofit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to deliver its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org) or [CruzRojaAmericana.org](https://www.CruzRojaAmericana.org), or follow us on social media.

###