

Blood Donation: How You Can Aid in the COVID-19 Fight and Make Your Community Healthier

By Pam Roberts, C(ASCP)cm, BHS MT, MLT(ASCP), KershawHealth Laboratory Director



Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood – but only about 10 percent of those who are eligible to give actually make a blood donation each year. Donated blood is a necessary part of helping patients cope with a wide variety of conditions, including burns, trauma, heart surgery, cancer, organ transplants and more. A one-time blood donation can save the lives of up to three people.

Today, as our community continues to fight COVID-19 and KershawHealth cares for patients suffering from this deadly disease, the need for donated blood is greater than ever. In addition to blood donations needed to prevent blood shortages and ensure a sufficient supply for standard

surgical and patient care, certain donations may be able to help COVID-19 patients recover more easily. Evidence shows that convalescent plasma from the blood donations of people who have recovered from COVID-19 can be used in some hospitalized patients to help lessen the severity or shorten the length of their illness. When someone who has recovered from COVID-19 donates blood, the liquid plasma and COVID-19 antibodies are separated from the blood cells and used for treatment.

If you have recovered from COVID-19, please consider donating. It is a gift that could potentially save lives. Even if you have not had COVID-19, your blood donation can help prevent a blood shortage.

Donating blood is a simple and safe process that includes registration, a confidential medical history survey and mini-physical, and the donation itself, which takes no more than 10 minutes. After your donation, you'll receive a snack and take a brief rest so you can get back to your day's activities with minimal disruption. All blood donations made through The Blood Connection are currently being tested for COVID-19 antibodies, and additional precautions are being taken to ensure your safety and the safety of The Blood Connection employees and volunteers.

Getting the donation process started is quick and easy with The Blood Connection's eXpress Donor Pass service, which you can complete by visiting <https://thebloodconnection.org/complete-your-health-history-questionnaire-online/>. You can also use The Blood Connection Donor App, which you can download from the Apple App Store or Google Play for your smartphone or tablet. TBC eXpress gives you a head start on your pre-donation education and health history survey and allows you to save time at the donation location.

Blood donation is one of the simplest and most effective ways you can give back to your neighbors, help us fight illness and disease, and make our community healthier.

If you are interested in giving blood or have questions regarding the donation process, please call 1.800.392.6551 or visit <https://thebloodconnection.org/> to learn more about COVID-19 precautions and if you're eligible to donate.