



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: [Jeff Gohringer](#), (202) 654-2901

America's Blood Centers Urges Blood Donations to Support Sickle Cell Patients on World Sickle Cell Day

Washington, DC – America's Blood Centers (ABC), the national organization of community-based, independent blood centers that supply 60 percent of the nation's blood supply, today is calling on eligible individuals to give blood to help patients battling sickle cell disease in honor of World Sickle Cell Disease on June 19th. Sickle cell disease affects approximately 100,000 Americans, occurring in about 1 out of every 365 Black or African American births. This hereditary disorder causes sickle-shaped red blood cells, leading to painful episodes and chronic anemia, often requiring lifelong blood transfusions to manage symptoms and prevent complications.

"Sickle cell warriors depend on regular blood transfusions to address the effects of their condition and manage complications. By taking just an hour to donate blood, you can make a life-changing difference for individuals living with this disease. We encourage all eligible individuals to make an appointment to donate blood to help ensure individuals with sickle cell receive the lifesaving transfusions they need," said Kate Fry, CEO of America's Blood Centers.

African American blood donors are 10 times more likely to have blood that lacks specific red blood cell antigens, which is required for many sickle cell patients to safely receive the blood transfusions they require to manage their disease. Without the 1 in 3 African American blood donors with the closely matched blood required for some patients with sickle cell disease, these patients would be unable to receive the transfusions that are required to manage their disease while avoiding potential life-threatening transfusion reactions. Additionally, 8 to 10% of African Americans have the sickle cell trait, and more than 100 million people worldwide have the sickle cell trait.

Blood transfusions are a critical treatment for many sickle cell patients, helping to reduce pain crises and prevent life-threatening complications. However, only 3% of the U.S. population donates blood each year. Expanding the donor base is essential to provide the best-matched blood for sickle cell patients. Individuals interested in donating can find their local community blood center [at AmericasBlood.org](#).

As part of its [Advocacy Agenda](#), ABC is urging members of Congress to introduce legislation to develop and implement a new pilot program that would provide grant funding directly to blood centers nationwide to help them attract more blood donors and to provide funding to allow increased testing to find the antigen matched blood necessary to meet every patient's need. Individuals can write to their members of Congress and encourage them to take action [here](#).

Founded in 1962, America's Blood Centers (ABC) is the national organization bringing together community-based, independent blood centers across North America. These organizations operate in more than 1,100 communities and provide close to 60 percent of the U.S. and a quarter of the Canadian blood supply. ABC member organizations serve more than 150 million people and provide blood products and services to more than 3,500 hospitals and healthcare facilities. All ABC U.S. members are 501(c)(3) organizations licensed and regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or Health Canada. For more information, visit [www.AmericasBlood.org](#).

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