

Blood Donations Needed to Maintain Adequate Blood Supply for Patients

Following weeks of declines in blood donations, the blood supply in the United States is significantly lower than it should be and is trending downward at a concerning pace. Blood centers throughout the country face the risk of not having blood available for every patient when it is needed. The reduced supply is more pronounced in certain regions of the country and among certain blood collectors, which is already impacting the availability of blood for some patients. To help rebuild the blood supply and ensure blood products are available for all patients, the AABB Interorganizational Task Force on Domestic Disasters and Acts of Terrorism is urging all eligible blood donors to make and keep an appointment to donate blood as soon as possible.

Blood donations are essential to keeping hospitals prepared for emergencies and everyday patient care. When blood donations decline, the consequences are felt by patients who depend on life-saving transfusions. The nation's blood supply is vulnerable, with some regions and blood collectors experiencing especially low inventories. Without the help of more people giving blood, hospitals may have to postpone or cancel upcoming surgeries, treatments or make difficult decisions about patient care.

“We are asking all potential donors – both regular and first-time donors – to make a commitment to donate blood in the coming days and weeks,” said John Hagins, chair of the Task Force. “Donating now, or making an appointment to donate soon, will help ensure that all patients throughout the country have access to the care they need.”

The Task Force strongly encourages eligible Americans to make an appointment to donate blood at their nearest blood collection location. Please contact one of the following organizations to schedule an appointment today:

- **AABB:** www.WhereToDonateBlood.org; +1.301.907.6977
- **America's Blood Centers:** www.americasblood.org; +1.202.393.5725
- **American Red Cross:** www.RedCrossBlood.org; +1.800.RED CROSS (+1.800.733.2767)

About the Task Force

The AABB Interorganizational Task Force on Domestic Disasters and Acts of Terrorism was formed in January 2002 to help make certain that blood collection efforts resulting from domestic disasters and acts of terrorism are managed properly and to deliver clear and consistent messages to the public regarding the status of America's blood supply. The Task Force is composed of representatives from U.S. blood services, associations and commercial entities, as well as liaisons from governmental agencies, who work together in an effort to ensure that safe and adequate blood product inventories are in place at all times in preparation for disasters. In addition, the Task Force operates as a mechanism to assess the need for collections and/or transportation of blood should a disaster occur.

AABB serves as the designated coordinating entity for the Task Force. In addition to AABB, members include AdvaMed, America's Blood Centers, American Hospital Association, American Red Cross, Blood Centers of America, College of American Pathologists, National Marrow Donor Program/Be The Match and the Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association. Liaisons from the following government agencies also participate in Task Force discussions: Armed Services Blood Program and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which includes the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Food and Drug Administration.