



**American
Red Cross**

Blood Program
Leader

UPDATE

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

The American Red Cross is closely monitoring the evolving situation regarding the outbreak of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). While the risk of contracting any coronavirus through a blood transfusion is extremely low, out of the abundance of caution, we are taking actions to help ensure the safety of the blood supply, our donors, recipients, volunteers and staff.

The Red Cross is asking that individuals postpone their donation for 28 days following:

- Travel to China and its special administrative regions, Hong Kong and Macau, as well as Iran, Italy and South Korea;
- Diagnosis of COVID-19, contact with a person who has the virus, or suspected to have it.

There will be signage and donor educational materials on COVID-19 at all Red Cross blood drives and donation centers across the country.

BLOOD SAFETY FOCUS

- The Red Cross uses safety measures to protect the blood supply from all respiratory viruses including this coronavirus strain.
 - In addition to the travel deferral, the health history screening also helps to protect the blood supply.
 - Blood is only collected from individuals who are healthy and feeling well at the time of donation.
 - Red Cross employees follow thorough safety protocols at our blood drives including wearing gloves and personal protective gear, wiping down donor-touched areas after every collection, using sterile collection sets for every donation, and arm scrubbing.
 - Call back number, to connect with trained donor counselors, is provided if donor develops any symptoms of illness within the days following donation. Donations from such donors are immediately quarantined and not used for transfusion.
 - The Red Cross continuously monitors virus activity and takes proactive actions to safeguard the blood supply when necessary.
- During this public health emergency, donation information may change in the days and weeks ahead, so please be sure to consult with your Red Cross representative or staff at your blood drive with any questions.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Recruit a few additional donors to your blood drive to help offset any individuals that may postpone their donation due to travel to affected areas.
- Educate your donors who have traveled to China and its special administrative regions, Hong Kong and Macau, as well as Iran, Italy and South Korea to schedule an appointment for more than 28 days after their return to the U.S.
- Volunteers who are helping donors at check-in and registration at your blood drive may be given information on-site regarding this coronavirus. They may be asked to share the information with donors and help those who may need to postpone their donation.
- For detailed donor eligibility questions, please have your donors call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org). For more information on the COVID-19, visit the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>.

Thank you for your support! Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your Red Cross representative.