

Hospital Demand for Convalescent Plasma Reaches Extraordinary Levels

OneBlood Urges People Recovered From COVID-19 to Donate Their Plasma

(July 13, 2020 – Orlando, Florida) As coronavirus cases surge the need for convalescent plasma is reaching extraordinary levels.

“OneBlood is experiencing more than a 500% increase in hospital orders for COVID-19 convalescent plasma. We are urging people who have recovered from the coronavirus to step forward and donate their plasma, they are urgently needed”, said Susan Forbes, Senior Vice President of Corporate Communications and Public Relations for OneBlood.

The surge in the number of people being diagnosed with coronavirus, coupled with the fact that hospitals are providing convalescent plasma earlier in treatment is driving demand for convalescent plasma to new heights.

“We’re seeing a dramatic increase in the number of hospitals requesting plasma. More than a thousand units of convalescent plasma are being transfused each day throughout the nation. We’re very concerned that convalescent plasma is going to become in short supply if we don’t have more people come out and donate”, said Peter Marks, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research.

Hospitals echoing the FDA’s call to action for more people who have recovered from COVID-19 to donate their plasma.

“The need for convalescent plasma and the number of sick patients that are coming in on a daily basis is staggering. We absolutely need people who have recovered from the virus to contact OneBlood and donate as soon as possible”, said Candice Sareli, M.D., Chief Medical Research Officer at Memorial Healthcare System in Miami, Florida.

“We’ve seen a shift of utilizing convalescent plasma in patients that are outside of the intensive care unit. We are using convalescent plasma 50% more now than we were before”, said Eduardo Oliveira, M.D., Executive Medical Director of Critical Care at AdventHealth in Orlando, Florida.

“We’re trying to give convalescent plasma to more patients earlier in their treatment to prevent progression of the disease. The more readily available convalescent plasma is, the less deaths we’re going to have from COVID-19 and the better outcomes we’re going to have”, said Samer Fahmy, M.D., Chief Medical Officer at Boca Raton Regional Hospital.

People who have recovered from the coronavirus have developed antibodies to the virus that remain in the plasma portion of their blood. By transfusing plasma from a person who has recovered from COVID-19 into a patient still fighting the virus, it can boost their immune system and potentially help them recover.

Miami Mayor Francis Suarez was the first person in Florida to donate convalescent plasma and recently returned to OneBlood to donate his plasma a second time. He's urging others who have recovered from COVID-19 to make donating their plasma a habit.

"I think it's important for everybody who has defeated COVID-19 to help others still fighting the virus to donate their plasma. We all have a moral obligation to give back to our community. I encourage people who have recovered from COVID-19 to contact OneBlood and donate your plasma and return each time you are eligible. You will be doing a tremendous service to the community and helping save lives", said Mayor Francis Suarez.

"Convalescent plasma is needed now more than ever. OneBlood is collecting convalescent plasma seven days a week throughout our service area. But it's a revolving door, as quickly as donations come in they are being processed, tested, and rushed to hospitals. People's lives are on the line and time is of the essence", said Forbes.

Plasma can be donated every 28 days. People who have recovered from the coronavirus are urged to visit www.oneblood.org to see if they meet the eligibility requirements to be a convalescent plasma donor. **Appointments are required.**

Convalescent Plasma Donor Eligibility Requirements

In addition to meeting all FDA donor eligibility to be a blood donor, COVID-19 convalescent plasma donors **must have complete resolution of symptoms at least 14 days prior to donation and provide one of the following:**

1. Provide prior diagnosis of COVID-19 documented by a laboratory test or a letter from a hospital confirming a COVID-19 diagnosis
2. OR, provide a positive serological test for SARS-CoV-2 antibodies

OneBlood Testing All Blood Donations for COVID-19 Antibody

OneBlood is also testing all blood donations for the COVID-19 antibody. The antibody test is authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and will indicate if the donor's immune system has produced antibodies to the virus, regardless of whether they ever showed symptoms. Donors will be able to see their results approximately two to five days after donating by logging into their donor portal

at www.oneblood.org. Donors who test positive for the antibody will be eligible to become COVID-19 convalescent plasma donors.

To access the video media toolbox [Click Here](#). Toolbox includes soundbites with the people listed below as well as b-roll.

1. Susan Forbes, OneBlood, Senior Vice President, Corporate Communications & Public Relations
2. Peter Marks, M.D., Ph.D., Director, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA),
3. Candice Sareli, M.D., Chief Medical Research Officer, Memorial Healthcare System
4. Samer Fahmy M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Boca Raton Regional Hospital
5. Eduardo Oliveira, M.D., Executive Medical Director, Critical Care, AdventHealth, Central Florida Division
6. Francis Suarez, Miami Mayor