



September | Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month

Blood Drive Coordinator Cheat Sheet

Did you know that September is recognized as “National Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month?” This month, there is an increased focus on the need for research, treatment, and increased awareness of Sickle Cell Disease – and the importance that volunteer blood donations have in treating these patients. Take this chance to celebrate the incredible impact your donors’ can have this month! Here are some fast facts about Sickle Cell Disease:

- Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is the **most common** hereditary disorder and currently affects over 70,000 Americans, predominantly people of African, Middle Eastern, Grecian, Indian, and Latin American descent.
- Sickle Cell disease causes the body to create abnormal hemoglobin and abnormally ‘sickle’ shaped red blood cells that causes pain and numerous health complication.
- Because of abnormal hemoglobin, red blood cells to stick together and create a ‘sickle’ shape, which causes pain and health complications.
- Although there is no cure for Sickle Cell Disease, blood transfusions (supplied exclusively by volunteer blood donors like us!) are a critical part of treatment.
- Many times, **only blood transfusions can relieve the pain and complications** that occur during a sickle cell episode.

Blood drives just like this one, the drives hosted by companies, schools, places of worship, and civic organizations, supply about **half of all the blood donations** across the US. How awesome is it to be part of that?

The Blood Center invites eligible donors to become part of how life flows through our community. Below are key points that can be helpful in your efforts to recruit donors and hold a successful drive.

Key Points on blood donation:

- Blood cannot be manufactured – it can only come from generous donors like you and me.
- Connecting with your donors is key to hold a successful drive.
- Don’t be afraid to try something new – whether it be recruiting tips, blood drive themes or a different way of marketing, always try and think out of the box!

Shout it Out!

Social media is an excellent tool to engage with your donors and maximize your number of donations. Exceed your drive goals with a breeze!

Connect with potential donors any way you can – create Facebook events, post links to stories and schedules, and keep them in the loop. Need a place to start? We’ve got you covered at www.bloodcenter.org/toolkit. Our website has some awesome resources specific to Sickle Cell Disease that can help engage your donors – before, during, and after your drive!