



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Blood Services of Illinois

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Blood Center to phase out COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma donation program

Due to strong inventory, decline in COVID-19 hospitalization rate, CCP collections will end March 26

(March 8, 2021 | Urbana, Illinois) – Community Blood Services of Illinois (CBSI) is announcing plans to phase out its COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma donation program effective March 26. With the recent decrease in hospitalization rates for COVID-19, demand for COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma, or CCP, has dropped to the point at which current inventories are sufficient to meet projections of patient need. The Blood Center first began working with donors who have recovered from a COVID-19 infection in April 2020, when the first donors in our region who had recovered from a COVID-19 infection became eligible to donate. During 11 months of collection, 2508 donors gave more than 6600 units of CCP for patient care.

Donors who currently have appointments to make a CCP donation on or before March 26 are encouraged to keep their appointment, but the Blood Center will no longer process new referrals for CCP donation. “The community response to our CCP program has been nothing short of amazing,” said Pete Lux, Director, Donor and Patient Services. “I’m so proud of everyone on our team who has helped recruit, qualify, schedule, test, process, and deliver donations over the last year. Most of all, we have the individual donors to thank for stepping forward to help COVID-19 patients.”

Convalescent plasma contains antibodies to the COVID-19 virus and are used in the treatment of patients hospitalized with a COVID-19 infection. CCP units may be stored in a frozen state for up to one year after the date of donation. Current inventories, locally and nationally, are deemed sufficient to meet ongoing patient need. **(See p. 2 for a chart of CCP distributions.)** Protocols will remain in place to resume CCP collection, if needed.

“If we should see an increase in demand for CCP due to rising infection and hospitalization rates, we are prepared to resume full scale recruitment and collection of CCP donations,” said Jeannine McCullough, Vice President, Blood Services.

More than 2500 donors from across the Blood Center’s service region stepped forward to give CCP donations during the 11 months of the program. Jose Rodriguez (pictured, right) gave plasma after recovering from a COVID-19 infection in March 2020. “I had a fever and body aches, and lost sense of smell and taste,” said Rodriguez, who recovered from his infection at home. “Now I want to do anything I can do to help make someone feel better.”

CBSI continues to recover from blood drive and appointment cancellations during the COVID-19 pandemic, and has a critical, ongoing need for red blood cell, platelet, and plasma donations from all blood types. “Blood products are used with patients in treatment for cancer, to respond to trauma, and for lifesaving surgical procedures,” said Amanda Hess, Director, Donor and Public Relations. “All of these reasons, and more, still occur during the pandemic.” To schedule an appointment for donation, call (800) 747-5401, schedule online at www.bloodcenter.org or via the Blood Center’s mobile app (www.bloodcenter.org/app).

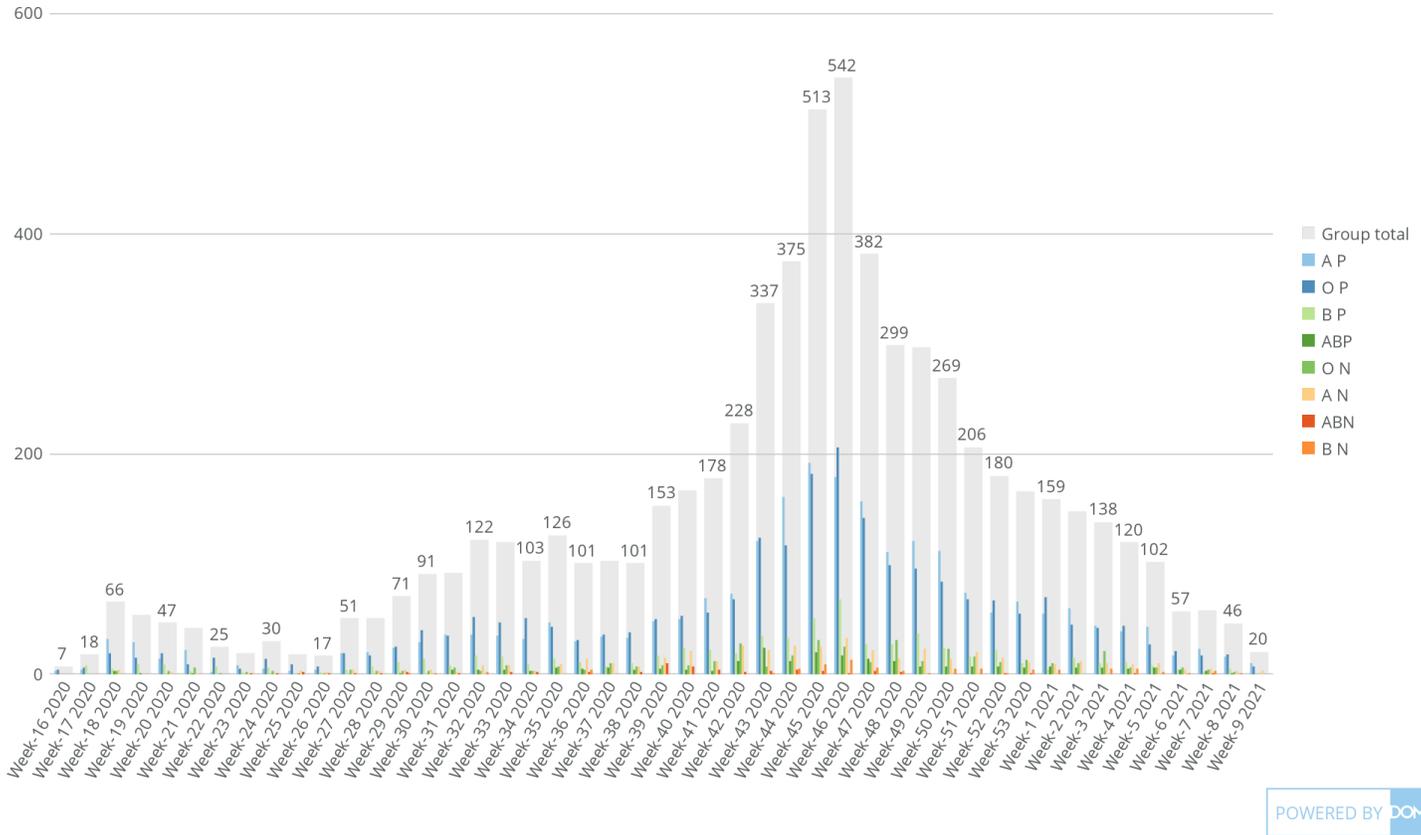


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MISSISSIPPI VALLEY REGIONAL BLOOD CENTER

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COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma Distribution, April 2020 through March 4, 2021



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About Community Blood Services of Illinois

Community Blood Services of Illinois (CBSI) is a division of Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center, not-for-profit provider of blood products and services to 120 hospitals in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Wisconsin, including Carle Foundation Hospital and OSF HealthCare Heart of Mary Medical Center in Champaign-Urbana, Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center in Mattoon, and OSF HealthCare Sacred Heart Medical Center in Danville.

The Blood Center’s [service region](#) extends from southwestern Wisconsin to St. Louis, Missouri and from Danville, Illinois to Chariton, Iowa. For more information, see www.bloodcenter.org and visit the Blood Center’s social media channels: www.facebook.com/MVRBC, www.twitter.com/willyougive, www.youtube.com/MVRBC, and www.instagram.com/willyougive/.

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