



Red Cross and Withers Broadcasting and Dana Communications invite the Community to Help Save Lives

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**American
Red Cross**

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (Nov. 23, 2020) - The American Red Cross and Withers Broadcasting and Dana Communications encourage the community to be the lifeline patients need and help ensure blood is available throughout the winter months. Give blood at the annual Withers Broadcasting and Dana Communications Holiday Blood Drive Monday, Dec. 7 from 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. There are three convenient locations in Illinois in the listening area, including Marion, Mt. Vernon and Nashville.

The American Red Cross is urging healthy donors of all blood types to [give blood](#) to ensure a strong blood supply for patients as the U.S. braces for flu season while in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We are so grateful to Withers for working with us this year,” said Ann Venhaus, account manager, donor recruitment of the Missouri-Illinois Blood Services Region. “COVID-19 has really had an impact on us and we need to continue to provide a stable blood supply for patients in need especially with the winter ahead. By giving blood at this drive, donors exemplify and expand a spirit of gratitude by helping ensure blood is available for patients throughout the upcoming holiday season.”

Blood donation opportunities:

Monday, Dec. 7 – 1:30-6:30 p.m.

- Veterans Airport – Charter Lounge, 10400 Terminal Drive #200, Marion, IL.
- **Mt. Vernon American Legion Post 141, 816 S. Main St., Mt. Vernon, IL.**
- **Nashville American Legion, 533 E. Legion Dr., Nashville, IL.**

Every two seconds in the United States blood is needed to respond to patient emergencies, including accident and burn victims, heart surgery and organ transplant patients, and those receiving treatment for leukemia, cancer or sickle cell disease. The Red Cross must collect nearly 13,000 blood and more than 2,600 platelet donations every day for the patients at about 2,500 hospitals nationwide, including 80 hospitals in Indiana.

Important COVID-19 information for donors

The Red Cross is testing blood, platelet and plasma donations for COVID-19 antibodies. The test may indicate if the donor’s immune system has produced antibodies to this coronavirus, regardless of whether they developed symptoms. Red Cross antibody tests will be helpful to identify individuals who have COVID-19 antibodies and may qualify to be convalescent plasma donors. Convalescent plasma is a type of blood donation collected from COVID-19 survivors that have antibodies that may help patients who are actively fighting the virus. Donors can expect to receive the results of their antibody test within 7 to 10 days through the Red Cross Blood Donor App or the donor portal at [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org).

The Red Cross is not testing donors to diagnose illness, referred to as a diagnostic test. To protect the health and safety of Red Cross staff and donors, it is important that individuals who do not feel well or believe they may be ill with COVID-19 postpone donation.

Each Red Cross blood drive and donation center follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and [additional precautions](#) – including temperature checks, social distancing and face coverings for donors and staff – have been implemented to help protect the health of all those in attendance. Donors are asked to schedule an appointment prior to arriving at the drive and are required to wear a face covering or mask while at the drive, in alignment with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention public guidance.

How to donate blood

Simply download the Red Cross Blood Donor App or visit RedCrossBlood.org, and enter sponsor code: **WITHERS**, or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or enable the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device to make an appointment or for more information. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

Blood and platelet donors can save time at their next donation by using RapidPass® to complete their pre-donation reading and health history questionnaire online, on the day of their donation, before arriving at the blood drive. To get started, follow the instructions at RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass or use the Blood Donor App.

About the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on vol