

Flu Season May Impact Red Cross Blood Supply

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ST. LOUIS - The American Red Cross urges blood and platelet donors to give now and help fight the potential impact of seasonal illnesses and a potentially severe flu season on the blood supply.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention predicts a serious spread of flu this year and is already reporting an early spike in cases in several states. When seasonal illnesses increase, the number of healthy donors tends to decrease, leaving the Red Cross blood supply vulnerable to a potential shortage over the holidays.

Paired with busy holiday schedules, seasonal illnesses may make it harder to collect the blood hospital patients require this winter. Donors especially those with type O blood

and those giving platelets can help bolster the blood supply now by making an appointment to give in the coming weeks.

There is no waiting period to donate blood or platelets after receiving a flu shot. Schedule an appointment by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Learn more about flu safety and prevention at [redcross.org/flusafety](https://www.redcross.org/flusafety).

As a thank-you, the Red Cross is offering several opportunities to donors this month:

- All who come to give Nov. 1-22 will receive a \$10 e-gift card to a merchant of choice. Details are available at [org/perks](https://www.redcross.org/perks).
- Those who come to give over the Thanksgiving holiday, Nov. 23-27, will get a Red Cross knit beanie, while supplies last.
- All who come out to help Nov. 28-Dec. 15 will receive a \$10 Amazon.com Gift Card by email, thanks to Amazon. Details are available at [org/together](https://www.redcross.org/together)