



For Immediate Release

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Blood Supply to Local Hospitals Running on Fumes

*Bloodworks Northwest issuing urgent appeal for donors after inventories dipped
Concerning emergency shortage of Type O Blood before Fourth of July*

(June 24, 2024 Seattle, WA) – There is an urgent need for blood donations heading into Fourth of July. Bloodworks Northwest reports the local blood supply is running on fumes, as donations are down and patient needs for Type O blood and platelets are at their highest during the “100 deadliest days” —a time of increased motor accidents—between Memorial Day and Labor Day. All eligible donors are urged to make an appointment to donate in the days and weeks ahead.

“We’re operating on critically low levels of Type O Negative blood for the last 60 days and the hospital need for Type O blood group – the most needed in trauma situations – has risen six percent above average,” said Dr. Kirsten Alcorn, Co-Chief Medical Officer of Bloodworks Northwest. “We’re concerned the upcoming Fourth of July weekend will decrease the inventory of blood for emergencies at a time when trauma units around our region experience high patient usage. It’s vital the public prioritize donating blood to keep our community safe this summer.”

This Fourth of the July, the blood supply is facing a unique challenge. Not only is the holiday on a Thursday meaning more people will be taking a long weekend, Bloodworks Northwest is on call with the Blood Emergency Management Corps (BERC) to potentially ship blood anywhere in the U.S. in a mass disaster. Just last Memorial Day Weekend, Bloodworks rushed a shipment of blood to Texas to help those impacted by dangerous tornadoes. Now, as we approach another critical period, people are encouraged to give blood and platelets for both local patients and emergencies nationwide.

It takes 1,000 donors a day of all blood types to maintain a safe and reliable blood supply for unexpected emergencies and continued medical care in our region. Only 29% of the donors needed the week of Fourth of July have booked appointments, leaving a gap of 10,800 open appointments through July 7.

Donating blood takes about an hour from check-in to post-donation cookie, and it is an hour well spent. Each donation is roughly one pint of blood and people needing transfusions often need multiple pints of blood. Those wishing to donate can encourage a friend to book an appointment with them, doubling the number of lives potentially saved.

Donate & Win Tickets to See Taylor Swift

Bloodworks has exciting perks for people who donate this summer to help end the shortage. Donors can [enter to win](#) two tickets to see Taylor Swift at The Eras Tour stop in Vancouver, BC as part of Bloodworks Music's In Our Blood Campaign. All donors between July 3-6 earn double entries in the Taylor Swift ticket giveaway. Donors who create donor portal accounts can also receive gift card promotions when they sign up to receive emails.

About Donating Blood:

- Donating blood takes about an hour from check in to post-donation cookie. Actual donation time is about 10 minutes. Appointments and photo ID required. Information about [who can donate](#) and where, is available at www.bloodworksnw.org.
- Most people in good health, at least 18 years old, and who weigh at least 110lbs can donate whole blood. Ages 16 & 17 may donate in WA with signed [Bloodworks permission form](#). In OR, anyone over 16 can donate. Read [detailed eligibility Q&A](#) or call 800-398-7888.
- More gay and bisexual men are now able to donate blood under new FDA guidance. Learn about new eligibility guidelines making blood donation more inclusive: <https://www.bloodworksnw.org/pride>
- Approximately 39% of the population has Type O+ blood and 9% has Type O- universal blood type. This is known as the universal blood type. You do not need to know your blood type to donate blood. First time donors who sign up for email will learn their unique blood type following donation.
- Platelets can only be stored for 5-7 days. It is critical that we provide a constant, steady supply for patients in our community. Ask about a platelet count at your blood donation.

Bloodworks Donor Centers and Blood Drives:

Appointments and information at BloodworksNW.org or 800-398-7888. [See map](#) of Donor Centers and Blood Drives near you.

About Bloodworks Northwest – About Bloodworks Northwest

Donations to Bloodworks Northwest provide lifesaving blood supply to 95% of Pacific Northwest hospitals. Since 1944, Bloodworks has served the Pacific Northwest as a local, nonprofit, independent, volunteer-supported and community-based blood center and research institute. Bloodworks partners closely with local hospitals to deliver the highest level of patient care. Its comprehensive services include blood components, complex cross-matching, specialized lab services for organ transplants, care for patients with blood disorders and collection of cord blood stem cells for cancer treatment. Bloodworks Research Institute performs leading-edge research in blood biology, transfusion medicine, blood storage and treatment of blood disorders. Patients with traumatic injuries, undergoing surgeries or organ transplantation, or receiving treatment for cancer and blood disorders all depend on its services, expertise, laboratories and research. Hear lifesaving stories by subscribing to the award-winning [Bloodworks 101 podcast](#). Blood donation appointments can be scheduled at BloodworksNW.org.