

**DID YOU HAVE COVID-19? DO YOU WANT TO HELP OTHERS?**

# **DONATE YOUR PLASMA!**

## **WHAT IS “PLASMA”?**

Think of blood as if it were the final product of a soup recipe. The main ingredients—red and white blood cells, platelets, etc.— are all suspended in a watery broth; that is plasma. Plasma is 90% water, and also contains salts, enzymes, and antibodies. When blood is collected, whether for donation or lab testing, it can be separated out into these individual components to be used to make treatments for patients whose bodies are low on one or more of these critical “ingredients”.

## **WHAT IS “CONVALESCENT PLASMA”?**

When a virus, like a common cold or COVID-19, finds its way into the body, our immune system creates antibodies which are specially made to fit together with that particular invader, like a lock and key. These antibodies travel through the bloodstream, searching for their perfect match (the virus) and binding to it. This disables the virus so it cannot invade cells and cause damage (symptoms).

After a person recovers from COVID-19 (entering what is called the “convalescent phase” of their illness), their plasma still carries these antibodies which neutralize the virus. The recovered person can now donate their blood—which includes their antibody-rich plasma— which is processed and given to patients with severe COVID-19 disease whose immune systems are not able to produce these antibodies quickly enough. These antibodies can get started on their seek-and-destroy mission right away, helping the recipient recover from their illness.

## **I WAS DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19; CAN I DONATE?**

To be a convalescent plasma donor, individuals must have had a positive COVID-19 test and must be completely symptom-free for 14 days prior to

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

**Having an autoimmune disease or taking biologic medications does not automatically make you ineligible to donate. If you are interested in donating but have questions or concerns about your health, contact your healthcare provider.**



donation. In addition, individuals also need to meet general blood donor requirements. For more information about eligibility criteria, visit the Red Cross [website](#). For information about how to donate, contact your [local donor center](#).

## HOW DO I FIND MY LOCAL DONOR CENTER?

One way to learn about your options for donating is to fill out the [COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma Donor Eligibility Form](#) found at RedCrossBlood.org. The AABB, formerly the American Association of Blood Banks, also has a [Donation Site Locator](#) on their website.

## LOOKING FOR OTHER WAYS TO HELP?

### TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO DONATE PLASMA!

Patients fighting severe COVID-19 disease are not the only people who benefit from plasma donation. Plasma is used to make life-saving immunoglobulin infusions for patients whose immune systems need help fighting infections every day. Plasma proteins therapies are also used in emergency medicine and to treat bleeding disorders.

PLASMA PROTEINS ARE ALSO USED TO TREAT:							
	<b>BURNS</b> (ALBUMIN)		<b>MAJOR SURGERY</b> (ALBUMIN)		<b>ORGAN TRANSPLANTS</b> (ANTI-CMV IG)		<b>LIVER CONDITIONS</b> (ALBUMIN)
	<b>SHOCK</b> (ALBUMIN)		<b>RH INCOMPATIBILITY</b> (ANTI-RH IG)		<b>PEDIATRIC HIV</b> (IGIV)		<b>ANIMAL BITES</b> (ANTI-TETANUS IG)
	<b>TRAUMA</b> (ALBUMIN)		<b>CARDIOPULMONARY ISSUES</b> (ALBUMIN)		<b>HEPATITIS</b> (ANTI-HBV IG)		<b>AUTO-IMMUNE DISEASES</b> (IMMUNE GLOBULINS)

Source: Plasma Protein Therapeutics Association

Whereas a single blood donation can help up to three people, it can take *hundreds* of plasma donations to treat *a single patient* for just one year, and for many patients treatment is life-long. We need more healthy, willing donors, so please help spread the word!



## REFERENCES

American Red Cross. (2020, May 12). *Plasma Donations from Recovered COVID-19 Patients*. Retrieved from American Red Cross Blood Services: <https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/dlp/plasma-donations-from-recovered-covid-19-patients.html#donorform>

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