



September 11, 2020

Dear Blood Donor,

As a donor, you have provided a tremendous service to our community. You have been there to offer the gift of blood and blood products to those in need and we thank you for being a donor.

While the demand for all blood remains great, given the unprecedented situation facing our community (and the nation) due to the SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2), we are looking for donors who have recovered from COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) to provide the gift of life through the donation of convalescent plasma.

What is Convalescent Plasma?

This is plasma collected from patients who have recovered from an infection. Plasma from recovered patients contains antibodies that may be used to treat critically ill patients currently infected with the same disease.

While clinical trials are currently being performed for widespread use of convalescent plasma to treat patients with COVID-19, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized hospitalized patients with COVID-19 to receive this investigational treatment.

Who is Eligible?

Prospective convalescent plasma donors must meet all screening and eligibility requirements for regular blood donation. Female donors must test negative for HLA antibodies (HLA antibody tests performed by BBA at time of donation). Donors must have complete resolution of symptoms (if present) at least 14 days before donating.

According to the FDA, donors must provide evidence of COVID-19 documented by a laboratory test either by:

- Individuals who had symptoms of COVID-19 and positive test result from a diagnostic test approved, cleared, or authorized by FDA.

OR

- Individuals who did not have a prior positive diagnostic test and/or never had symptoms of COVID-19 may be qualified to donate if they have had reactive (positive) results in two different tests approved, cleared, or authorized by FDA to detect SARS-CoV-2 antibodies.

Donors must provide evidence of COVID-19 documented by a laboratory test approved, cleared, or authorized by FDA. A list of all current COVID-19 in vitro diagnostics is available at: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/mcm-legal-regulatory-and-policy-framework/emergency-use-authorization#covidinvitrodev>.

Note: Laboratory reports must include the donor's name and date of birth and where the test was performed.

Please call us at (907) 222-5630 if you have any questions regarding your eligibility.

Is Convalescent Plasma a Promising Treatment for COVID-19?

SARS-CoV-2 is novel (new) and clinical trials are still being performed regarding the effectiveness of convalescent plasma for COVID-19 patients. However, according to the FDA, convalescent plasma is a promising treatment that has also been studied in outbreaks of other respiratory infections including the 2009-2010 H1N1 influenza virus pandemic, 2003 SARS-CoV-1 epidemic, and the 2012 MERS-CoV epidemic (1).



Blood Bank of Alaska
Helping Alaska patients in need

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How Does Donating Convalescent Plasma Work?

For a donor, the process of donating convalescent plasma is similar to a regular donation. Convalescent plasma may be donated either through whole blood or apheresis donation. BBA is following all FDA guidelines regarding this emerging investigational treatment. We are also following recommendations established by the CDC in order to limit disease transmission (including social distancing) and all staff are wearing masks and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Please visit our website at <https://www.bloodbankofalaska.org> and click on the COVID-19 banner to become a donor. As a blood donor, you have already provided the gift of life to individuals in need—this is your opportunity to once again serve as a Hero Donor and personally make an impact during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you,

Robert W. Scanlon
Chief Executive Officer

References:

1. [FDA: Recommendations for Investigational COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma:](https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/investigational-new-drug-ind-or-device-exemption-ide-process-cber/recommendations-investigational-covid-19-convalescent-plasma)
<https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/investigational-new-drug-ind-or-device-exemption-ide-process-cber/recommendations-investigational-covid-19-convalescent-plasma>
2. [FDA Statement: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update: Blood Donations:](https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-blood-donations)
<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-blood-donations>