



September 11, 2020

Dear Prospective Blood Donor,

Blood Bank of Alaska (BBA) is in critical need of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) to donate 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.

Is Donating Blood Safe?

If you are a prospective first-time donor of blood or blood products, please know that the donation process is safe (2). Every day, people around the nation save lives by donating blood. BBA is licensed by the FDA and is accredited by AABB (formerly known as the American Association of Blood Banks). Our staff is available to answer any questions that you may have regarding blood donation.

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).

How Does Donating Convalescent Plasma Work?

For a donor, donating convalescent plasma is similar to a regular blood donation. Convalescent plasma may be donated either through whole blood or apheresis (an automated process where the donor provides select blood components i.e., plasma, platelets, or red blood cells).

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.

We welcome you to become a Hero Donor today. This is your opportunity to provide the gift of life to individuals in need and make a personal 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>