



April 9, 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 patients with, or at risk of, severe or life-threatening COVID-19 to receive this treatment through an expanded access program (1).

Who is Eligible?

Prospective convalescent plasma donors must meet all screening and eligibility requirements for regular blood donation. Female donors must either have never been pregnant or else test negative for HLA antibodies (HLA antibody tests performed by BBA at time of donation). All prospective donors must meet either of the following conditions:

- Donor must have had a previous diagnosis of COVID-19 documented by a laboratory test and complete resolution of mild to severe symptoms for 28 or more days **or**
- Donor must have had a previous diagnosis of COVID-19 documented by a laboratory test, a complete resolution of mild to severe symptoms for 14-27 days, and a subsequent negative test result for COVID-19.

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

Is it Safe?

There is currently no evidence indicating that the SARS-CoV-2 virus can be transmitted via blood transfusion; further, patients who receive these convalescent plasma treatments are already positive for and experiencing severe symptoms from 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, 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 is wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).



Blood Bank of Alaska
Helping Alaska patients in need

1215 Airport Heights Dr. • Anchorage, AK 99508 • Tel: 907-222-5600 • Fax: 907-222-5683 • www.bloodbankofalaska.org

Please visit our website at <https://www.bloodbankofalaska.org> and click on the “Become a Convalescent Plasma Donor” link under the “COVID-19” tab 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: Investigational COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma - Emergency INDs:](https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/investigational-new-drug-ind-or-device-exemption-ide-process-cber/investigational-covid-19-convalescent-plasma-emergency-inds)
<https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/investigational-new-drug-ind-or-device-exemption-ide-process-cber/investigational-covid-19-convalescent-plasma-emergency-inds>
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>