

# Roll up your sleeves: Red Cross says blood need 'urgent'

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(HealthDay)—The American Red Cross says it has an urgent need for

blood donations, with less than a five-day supply of blood on hand to help those who need it.

"The Red Cross continues to have an emergency need for blood and platelet donors to give now and help save patient lives," Nick Gehrig, communications director for Red Cross Blood Services, said in a news release.

The organization noted it first alerted Americans to the need for blood and platelet donations back in early July. And while donation levels did rise, "a critical blood shortage remains," the group said.

"At times, blood and platelets are being distributed to hospitals faster than donations are coming in, which impacts the ability to rebuild the blood supply," the Red Cross explained.

Right now, the national supply has dipped below the five-day level the Red Cross says it needs to make sure it's ready for unforeseen emergencies.

"We are grateful for those who have already stepped up this summer to give and want to remind those who are eligible that hospital patients are still counting on them to roll up a sleeve," Gehrig said.

All blood types are needed, and the Red Cross is even offering donors an incentive in this blood drive. All those who donate by Aug. 31 will receive a \$5 Amazon gift card claim code, emailed to them after their donation.

To schedule an appointment to donate, head to [redcrossblood.org](https://redcrossblood.org) or call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Donated blood can save lives. Just ask Ray Poulin, whose liver and

kidneys failed after a severe blood infection. Given only a one in 10 chance of survival, he received 77 units of blood—and lived.

"There was a lot that went into saving my life, but if the [blood](#) wasn't available when I needed it, I wouldn't be here today," Poulin said in the Red Cross news release.

**More information:** Find a donation center near you at the [American Red Cross](#).

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