

# Red cross issues urgent call for blood ahead of the holidays

November 15 2018

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(HealthDay)—There is an urgent need for blood and platelet donations

in the United States because donations during September and October fell 21,000 units short of hospital needs, the American Red Cross says.

"Today, the Red Cross asks the American public for help. As we head into the busy holiday season, we are facing a particularly challenging situation and need [blood](#) and platelet donors to replenish the [blood supply](#) for hospital patients counting on us," Chris Hrouda, president of Red Cross Blood Services, said in an agency news release. "Every day, we depend on the generosity of volunteers to roll up a sleeve to help ensure lifesaving blood products are available for those in need, and today that need is urgent."

Mother Nature has wreaked havoc with the blood supply, too, the agency noted. The Red Cross said the number of blood drives hosted by volunteer sponsors and coordinators was down by more than 1,000 in September and October—a large number canceled due to Hurricanes Michael and Florence.

More than 4,300 blood drives are needed to help stop the shortage from continuing throughout the winter, so the Red Cross is asking organizations to host [blood drives](#) in December, January, and February. Individuals can make an appointment to donate by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, going to the Red Cross website, or calling 1-800-733-2767. People who are age 17 years in most states (16 years with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds, and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood.

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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