

Encouraging critically necessary blood donation among minorities

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Better community education and communication are critical for increasing levels of blood donation among minorities, according to a study by researchers at Georgia State University and Georgia Southern

University.

Nursing associate professor Regena Spratling in the Byrdine F. Lewis College of Nursing and Health Professions at Georgia State and her colleagues in the Georgia Southern University School of Public Health conducted the first systematic literature review of research on barriers and facilitators among minorities with [blood donations](#).

The research found that medical mistrust is a significant barrier to blood donation among minorities. More significant to healthcare providers is a lack of explanation to [minority](#) donors when they are turned down to being a [donor](#). For example, potential donors found to have low hemoglobin may believe that permanently bans them from giving blood when in they may be eligible later if they eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of fluids. Better education by [healthcare providers](#) working with these donors can reduce this barrier, researchers said.

Knowing a blood transfusion recipient made minorities more likely to donate, the researchers found. In many [minority communities](#), donating blood for a friend, family, church or community member is positively viewed. Cultural or community ties are linked closely to blood donation. Giving blood to benefit one's community was a primary motivator.

A higher prevalence of blood-based, hereditary diseases, such as sickle cell and thalassemia, is found among minorities. These diseases increase the need for blood products in minority populations. Blood from donors with similar backgrounds reduces the likelihood of severe transfusion complications. These subtle similarities go deeper into blood background than blood types A, B, AB and O and positive and negative Rh factor.

The researchers reviewed nearly four dozen articles in peer-reviewed journals on blood donation with corresponding data on donors. Half of the articles appeared in publications focused on blood transfusion. The

remainder were in related journals. Very few articles in nursing or broader healthcare journals focused on blood donations in specific race and ethnic populations. The researchers found the lack of widespread discussion of low minority [blood](#) donation was a primary barrier to solving the problem.

Provided by Georgia State University

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