

# Roll up your sleeve and donate blood for cancer patients

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Many people don't realize that cancer patients are in constant need of

blood supplies.

Chemotherapy and radiation treatments for cancer can damage the body's ability to produce [healthy blood cells](#) and cause potentially life-threatening conditions. Blood transfusions help provide critical clotting factors, proteins and antibodies.

Now, the American Red Cross and the American Cancer Society want to remind the public to give blood for this vulnerable group of patients.

"The Give Blood to Give Time partnership is a wonderful opportunity to harness the unique strengths of both organizations and provide a way for people to help give patients and their families the resources they need to fight back," said Gail McGovern, president and chief executive officer of the American Red Cross.

"I know from experience that a loved one's diagnosis can make family and friends feel helpless," she added in a joint news release. "They often don't realize that individuals can make a difference by giving blood and platelets."

Nearly a quarter of the nation's blood supply is needed for [cancer patients](#).

"The need for blood in cancer treatments is an important and untold story," said Gary Reedy, chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society. "Through this partnership, we want people to know there are multiple ways they can help and make a meaningful difference in the lives of patients and their families."

You can help by donating blood to the Red Cross or giving a monetary gift to either group.

To give blood, you need to show a donor card or a driver's license or two other forms of identification. In most states, people who are 17 years of age, weigh at least 110 pounds and are in general good health may be eligible to donate blood. Some states allow 16-year-olds to donate, with parental consent.

High school students and other donors 18 and younger also must meet certain height and weight requirements.

**More information:** Here's where you can learn more about [Give Blood to Give Time](#).

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