

# American Red Cross issues urgent plea for blood donations

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The American Red Cross has declared a national blood shortage

emergency as donations plummet to the lowest levels seen in 20 years.

"One of the most distressing situations for a doctor is to have a hospital full of patients and an empty refrigerator without any [blood](#) products," Pampee Young, M.D., chief medical officer of the Red Cross, said in a news release from the organization. "A person needs lifesaving blood every two seconds in our country—and its availability can be the difference between life and death; however, blood is only available thanks to the generosity of those who roll up a sleeve to donate."

An upsurge in donors of blood and platelets is needed immediately.

There is an added incentive right now: Donors have a chance to win tickets to this year's Super Bowl, courtesy of the NFL. Volunteers can sign up to donate now by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) or calling 800-RED-CROSS (800-733-2767) to find their local donation center.

Americans' blood donations have charted a steady decline over the past two decades, dropping by about 40 percent during that time, according to the Red Cross. That leads to crises like the 7,000-unit shortfall in donations that occurred between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Winter is typically a tough time for [donations](#), with [bad weather](#) or illnesses like colds, flu, or COVID keeping people away from donation centers. Add to that the shift by many Americans to [remote work](#), which makes donation less convenient for many, the Red Cross said. Finally, new blood donation protocols, such as raising minimum hemoglobin requirements, have meant fewer people (especially teens) are eligible to donate.

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



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