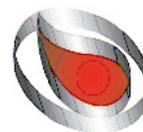


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MILLER-KEYSTONE
BLOOD CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: December 7, 2020

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MILLER-KEYSTONE ISSUES CRITICAL APPEAL FOR BLOOD DONORS

LEHIGH VALLEY, PA - Miller-Keystone Blood Center has issued an **urgent appeal for donors of all Blood types**, and in particular, the O-positive and O-negative Blood types.

"Blood donations typically decrease this time of year, due to holiday activity, combined with inclement weather, accidents, and seasonal illnesses," explains Qiana Cressman, Executive Director of Donor Operations.

Ms. Cressman adds that the COVID-19 pandemic added an additional layer of challenges during the past few months.

"The COVID-19 pandemic forced the Blood Center to cancel several hundred drives, resulting in the loss of more than 12,000 Blood donations between March and July," she confirmed. "It also required us to move to an appointment-only policy in order to accommodate current social distancing recommendations."

Ms. Cressman continues, "Our regional Blood supply typically recognizes an uptick beginning in September when our regional high schools and colleges are back in session. However with many schools adopting online or hybrid models for the upcoming school year, we were notified by many of these institutions that they will be unable to host Blood Drives for the foreseeable future."

"More than 450 donors are needed every day in our community to help in the care of cancer patients, accident victims, premature infants and others requiring lifesaving transfusions at our regional hospitals," says Marie Clemens, Corporate Director of Communications.

Ms. Clemens notes that just one major trauma or disaster could have devastating effects on the Blood Center's ability to provide for the transfusion needs of our community.

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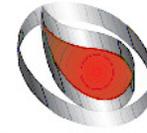
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"While the loss of blood drives at our regional high schools and colleges, as well as some area businesses, has resulted in a decrease in our community blood supply, the demand at our hospitals remains steady," she continued. "We would just like to remind people that Blood cannot be manufactured, it can only come from the kind generosity of volunteer Blood donors. If there is ever a time to donate, now is that time."

Ms. Cressman confirms **that effective November 24, Miller-Keystone Blood Center also updated its donor eligibility guidelines**, and that many individuals previously deferred from donating may now, in fact, be eligible.

"The deferral criteria for individuals receiving tattoos and/or piercings has been updated to three months," she explains. "Criteria for certain travel, medications and a few other areas has also been revised."

In order to donate, individuals must be 16 years of age* or older, weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and be feeling healthy; they must not have donated in the past eight weeks. All donors must also provide valid identification, and bring a mask to wear during their donation. (* - parental consent required for 16-year-old donors)

Ms. Clemens adds that **the Blood Center is currently operating under an appointment-only policy** to accommodate current social distancing recommendations. For the most up-to-date eligibility guidelines, operating hours at MKBC's Donor Centers and Satellite Locations, or to schedule a donation online, visit GIVEaPINT.org.

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