

News Release



**American
Red Cross**

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givebloodgivelife.org

Make an Appointment to Donate Blood in Observance of Memorial Day

As the sole blood supplier to area Veterans Affairs hospitals, the Red Cross counts on generous donors to give the gift of life for veteran patients

ST. PAUL, Minn. (May 19, 2009) – From the battlefields of wars past to the VA Medical Centers in Minneapolis and St. Cloud today, volunteer blood and platelet donors help support the needs of veterans through the American Red Cross. In observance of Memorial Day, the American Red Cross invites eligible individuals to make an appointment to give blood or platelets for patients in need at area hospitals, including the Minneapolis and St. Cloud VA Medical Centers, as well as patients throughout the country.

“Many of our veteran patients depend on blood transfusions as part of their treatment,” said Robert Skeate, M.D., assistant medical director at the local Red Cross Blood Services Region and transfusion medicine physician at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. “By making an appointment to give blood or platelets in honor of these patients you can not only honor them, you can also help save their lives.”

Blood and platelet donations can drop immediately before and after the Memorial Day when many donors are vacationing, however, the need for blood doesn’t take a vacation – it is constant.

To learn more and make an appointment to donate, call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (448-3543) or visit givebloodgivelife.org. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver’s license, or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Eligible donors must be at least 17 years old, or 16 years old with a signed Red Cross parental/guardian consent form where state permits, must weigh at least 110 pounds and be in general good health.

About the American Red Cross

Governed by volunteers and supported by giving individuals and communities, the American Red Cross is the single largest supplier of blood products to hospitals throughout the United States. While local hospital needs are always met first, the Red Cross also helps ensure no patient goes without blood no matter where or when they need it. In addition to providing nearly half of the nation’s blood supply, the Red Cross provides relief to victims of disaster, trains millions in lifesaving skills, serves as a communication link between U.S. military members and their families, and assists victims of international disasters or conflicts.

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The need is constant. The gratification is instant. Give blood.™