



New Red Cross Blood Donation Bus Making Stops Across the Metro

Bus offers donors greater comfort and convenience

OMAHA, Neb. (February 10, 2009) – The American Red Cross Midwest Blood Services Region can't wait to get the newest member of its mobile blood donation fleet rolling.

“Our staff is very excited to get the bus on the road,” said Tricia Rubens, CEO of the local Red Cross Blood Services region. “We are so happy to have made this investment for our community, making it easier and more convenient for donors in the metro area to give blood.”

The interior of the new five-bed bus offers greater climate control and a more open floor plan, providing a more comfortable donor experience. Among the new features are beds with reversible arm rests, allowing either right- or left-arm donations, which means donors won't have to wait for a bed that meets their arm preferences.

Like other buses in the fleet, the new bus will collect whole blood products. In addition, the bus is the first of the fleet to have the capacity to collect automated double red cell donations. Double red donation allows donors to give two red cell units while plasma and some saline solution is returned to the donor. Overall, less blood volume is given than a whole blood donation, but the donation of red cells is increased making this a more concentrated and consistent product for patients.

The exterior of the shiny, 40-foot-long red and white bus offers donors the simple reminder to please give blood. Approximately every two seconds someone in America needs blood. These people are our family, friends, neighbors and community members. The mobile blood donation bus is a reminder that in about an hour, individuals can donate about a pint of blood that has the potential to help save up to three patients' lives.

The bus, which arrived in Omaha February 4, will be used regularly at blood drives at schools, churches and businesses. It will replace an older member of the fleet.

Upcoming public opportunities to donate on the new mobile blood donation bus:

Donors interested in giving at upcoming blood drives should call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543) or visit givebloodgivelife.org to make an appointment or for more information.

- Faith Westwood Church blood drive on February 22 from 7:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
- Alegent Health Immanuel Medical Center blood drive on February 26 from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

How to Donate Blood

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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