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**For Immediate Release**

**THE COMMUNITY BLOOD CENTER ANNOUNCES IT WILL  
CONDUCT ANTIBODY TESTING FOR THE CORONAVIRUS.**

*Testing will allow for identification of convalescent plasma donors,  
whose plasma can be used in the potential treatment of COVID-19 patients.*

*EDITORS NOTE: For the safety of donors and staff, visitors to The Community Blood Center must complete a Health Declaration Form and be approved prior to entry. Please contact Rachel Sonnentag to arrange media interviews and complete the necessary paperwork prior to visiting for interviews or video capture.*

APPLETON, Wis. (May 21, 2020) – The Community Blood Center (CBC) continues to contribute to the fight against the novel coronavirus by making convalescent plasma available for transfusion to patients suffering from severe cases of COVID-19. Today, CBC announces it has the capability to test for the antibody in plasma to identify individuals who can become convalescent plasma donors.

There are two ways to qualify as a convalescent plasma donor. The first is through a positive molecular test at point of diagnosis of infection. The second is laboratory evidence of antibody formation. CBC announces today it now has the capability to conduct this test and will do so with a segment of the blood donor population who may be eligible to become convalescent plasma donors.

The objective of CBC is to supply hospitals with blood and blood components. Therefore, the testing capabilities are reserved strictly to identify potential convalescent plasma donors, should the antibody test be positive. CBC is not capable of testing the general population. CBC is currently setting up the testing and anticipates it will begin to test the first week of June.

Prospective convalescent plasma donors need to meet the following eligibility:

- Had positive medical test diagnosing COVID-19 OR had symptoms of COVID-19 but did not receive a formal medical test diagnosis
- No longer has symptoms of COVID-19
- Meets all blood donor eligibility criteria

Those interested in learning more about convalescent plasma donation should contact CBC at (800) 280-4102 or complete the online form at [www.communityblood.org/donate-convalescent-plasma](http://www.communityblood.org/donate-convalescent-plasma).

Blood and blood components, such as convalescent plasma, remain safe. The antibody testing is not done as a safety measure on the blood itself, but to identify the plasma that could help COVID-19 patients. There is no known risk of transfusion transmission of this virus.

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CBC provides blood, platelets and plasma, including convalescent plasma, to hospitals to meet transfusion needs of patients. Among those hospitals CBC supports are more than 20 local hospitals and hospital systems, including ThedaCare. All blood and blood components the ThedaCare system relies on comes exclusively from CBC.

[Hear from spokespersons](#) from CBC and ThedaCare about the importance of convalescent plasma, the need for donors and the potential it has to help patients battling COVID-19 in our community.

- Dr. Todd Straus, Chief Medical Officer, The Community Blood Center
- Dr. Jennifer Frank, Chief Medical Officer, ThedaCare

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, patients in local hospitals still rely on transfusions for ongoing medical treatments. Blood is still needed for cancer patients, necessary surgeries and emergencies. Healthy and eligible individuals, including first-time donors, are encouraged to schedule an appointment at [www.communityblood.org](http://www.communityblood.org) or by calling (800) 280-4102.

### **About The Community Blood Center**

The Community Blood Center was established in 1955 and continues today as an independent nonprofit providing a safe and reliable blood supply to hospitals in Northeast Wisconsin, the Northwoods and upper Michigan. CBC has donor centers in Appleton, Oshkosh, Little Chute and Woodruff, and hosts over 100 blood drives every month. The Community Blood Center is a member of America's Blood Centers (ABC) and Blood Centers of America (BCA) which are networks of independent community-based, not-for-profit blood centers supporting the blood needs for approximately 60% of the United States.

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