

# Blood Donors Needed;

## Weather Causes 20,000-unit Deficit



*Right now, blood products are being distributed to hospitals as quickly as donations are coming in.*

Posted January 30, 2014

Since the beginning of January, winter storms and freezing temperatures have resulted in more than 600 American Red Cross blood drive cancellations and nearly 20,000 uncollected blood and platelet donations. Overall, 26 states and Washington, D.C. have had blood drives canceled because of weather.

Right now, blood products are being distributed to hospitals as quickly as donations are coming in. Eligible donors of all blood types are needed now to help restock Red Cross shelves. On average, the Red Cross must collect about 15,000 pints of blood every day for patients at approximately 2,700 hospitals and transfusion centers across the country. With about 20,000 blood and platelet donations canceled in January alone, the organization has seen the equivalent of having to shut down its operations across the nation for more than an entire day.

**BLOOD AND PLATELET DONORS NEEDED** There is an urgent need for blood types O positive, O negative, A negative and B negative. Eligible donors with these blood types are strongly encouraged to make an appointment to give in the coming days. There is also an urgent need for platelet donors to make and keep appointments to give. Platelets – a key clotting component of blood often needed by cancer patients - must be transfused within five days of donation, so donations are always needed.

**IN MEMORY OF ADLER** When he was just two years old, Adler Shelbourne was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive brain cancer. The handsome boy with bright eyes and a big smile battled his illness for a year before he lost his fight at the age of three.

As part of his treatment, Adler received blood products. His family has chosen to give back by hosting blood drives in his memory. The annual “Adler Strong” drives are held on his birthday, along with a charity walk to raise money to benefit the Riley Hospital Pediatric Brain Cancer Research Center. When blood donors roll up a sleeve in memory of Adler, they will be helping other patients fighting critical illness like cancer.

**HOW TO GIVE** For more information about donating blood, or to make an appointment to donate blood or platelets, please visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Individuals who are at least 17 years of age (16 with parental consent in some states), weigh at least 110 pounds and be in good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

**DOUBLE RED CELL DONATIONS** Donors with blood types O positive, O negative, A negative and B negative can consider making a double red cell donation where available. Double red cell donation is done with the help of an apheresis machine which collects the red cells but returns most of the plasma and platelets to the donor. Donors need to meet slightly higher hemoglobin and body height/weight requirements in order to be able to give a double red cell donation. Double red cell donations take approximately 30 minutes longer than a whole blood donation and allow you to give two units of red cells.