



NEWS RELEASE

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Lexington – It wasn't the bread and milk supply, but Kentucky's blood supply that suffered the most from the winter storm this week.

"Mobile blood drive cancellations started Monday and continued all week," said Martha Osborne, Executive Director of Marketing and Recruitment for Kentucky Blood Center (KBC). "Although we have been able to open our donor centers, only a few brave souls have actually stopped by to donate."

The Blood Center reported only a handful of donors Monday through Wednesday while transfusions didn't slow down. "This has created an urgent need for platelet and blood donors," said Osborne.

There has been some help, though. KBC belongs to a network of blood centers that collaborate and has received blood from California, Delaware, Florida, Iowa and Minnesota. "That has helped us get through the week. Moving forward, though, we'll need to replenish the blood supply, and we urge donors to come to a donor center or blood drive when they safely can," said Osborne.

How bad is it? KBC is currently meeting the needs of hospitals and patients with blood that was donated prior to the storm. It now must make up the donations lost this week, nearly 1,200. Those are needed for future accidents, cancer therapies, newborn babies and bleeding disorders.

Why is it a problem? KBC, with the support of its blood and platelet donors, saves Kentucky patients' lives and is responsible for providing blood throughout the Commonwealth, including trauma centers. Most donated red blood cells must be used within 42 days and platelets within five days.

What's needed? Platelet and blood donations of all types are needed right now. There is a special need for type O-negative blood since it's the type that can be given safely to anyone.

What's involved? A typical whole blood donation takes about an hour. Whole blood donors can make an appointment, but walk-ins are welcome. Donating platelets requires special equipment and takes about two hours, and those donations require an appointment. Donors should always be well hydrated and eat before donating.

Who can donate? Blood donors must be 17-years-old (16 with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds, be in general good health, show a photo I.D. and meet additional requirements. Sixteen-year-old donors must have a signed parental permission slip, which can be found at kybloodcenter.org.

Where to give: KBC has five donor centers and daily blood drives. Donor centers are listed below, and blood drive locations can be found at kybloodcenter.org.

Lexington - Beaumont Donor Center

3121 Beaumont Centre Circle

Pikeville Donor Center

472 S. Mayo Drive

Lexington – Andover Donor Center

3130 Maple Leaf Drive

Somerset Donor Center

10 Stonegate Centre (Stoplight 16-A)

Louisville – Middletown Donor Center

12905 Shelbyville Road

About Kentucky Blood Center

KBC, founded in 1968, is the largest independent, full-service, non-profit blood center in Kentucky. Licensed by the FDA, KBC's sole purpose is to collect, process and distribute blood for patients in Kentucky hospitals.