

Blood Donation, Seasonal Flu and H1N1 (Swine Flu)



1-800-GIVE-LIFE | givelife.org

- During a flu outbreak the American Red Cross remains committed to its core service of maintaining a safe blood supply.
- The need for blood does not go away during a flu pandemic. As the nation's largest blood supplier, the American Red Cross is prepared to take necessary steps to ensure blood remains available to those in need. Additional precautions will be taken when the CDC or other public health agencies advise of the need.
 - Blood collections staff utilize standard infectious disease precautions everyday to protect donors and staff.
 - Blood donors will be screened for flu symptoms. Donors showing flu-like symptoms will be asked to postpone donations for 24 hours after symptoms end.
 - Available data does not currently support donor deferral for individuals who have had exposure to or contact with a person who has confirmed or probable pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza or influenza-like symptoms.
 - Donors are asked to notify the American Red Cross if they become ill or exhibit symptoms within 7 days after donation.
- There are no documented cases of transfusion transmission of influenza virus. If it does occur, it would be rare since research shows influenza is primarily a respiratory virus. We will, however, closely monitor cases of H1N1 to ensure this is the case for this virus as well.
- If you receive the licensed seasonal flu or H1N1 vaccine, irrespective of whether it is the nasal spray (flu mist) or the flu shot, you are still eligible to donate blood if you have no fever and are symptom free.
- Individuals who are in good health are encouraged to continue to donate blood.