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American
Red Cross

Joint Statement: Widespread Snow and Ice Disrupting Nation's Blood Supply
February 18, 2021

The following statement has been issued by AABB, America's Blood Centers and the American Red Cross regarding the status of the nation's blood supply:

Severe winter storms bringing debilitating snow, ice and cold to much of the United States are causing widespread concern for the nation's blood supply. Many blood centers have had to close their doors for multiple days due to power outages or weather conditions, resulting in a loss of more than 25,000 donations in February alone. In addition, transportation difficulties—including treacherous roads and closed airports—are further complicating the ability to transport life-saving blood to hospitals for patients in need.

These weather-related challenges come at a time when the nation's blood supply was already strained. Some blood centers are now reporting critically low inventories, and blood collection organizations across the country are working together to help meet the need as best they can.

AABB, America's Blood Centers and the American Red Cross are joining together to urge eligible, healthy individuals to make and keep an appointment to donate blood, when they are able to do so in their community. Eligible individuals who are able to donate are asked to give blood now to help support those in your community, as well as those throughout the country. Eligible individuals in affected areas are asked to make an appointment to donate when it is safe to do so.

Right now, there is a particular need for type O blood donations. Type O negative blood can be transfused to patients with any blood type and is what hospital staff reach for during emergencies when there isn't time to determine a patient's blood type. Type O positive blood is the most transfused blood type and is also critical in trauma situations.

Blood has a short shelf life and the supply must constantly be replenished. Blood donors are needed now and will continue to be needed to help ensure the adequacy of the blood supply.

Blood collection organizations adhere to the highest standards of safety and infection control, and donors are needed to help save lives. AABB, America's Blood Centers and the American Red Cross are asking all healthy, eligible individuals to make an appointment today and in the weeks and months to come.

Please contact one of the following organizations to find a local blood collection site and to schedule an appointment to donate:

AABB: www.aabb.org; +1.301.907.6977

America's Blood Centers: www.americasblood.org; +1.202.393.5725

American Red Cross: www.redcrossblood.org; +1.800.RED CROSS (+1.800.733.2767)