

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Amid blood shortage, ConnectLife welcomes more donors to give

ConnectLife has formally updated their blood donation guidelines to allow people to donate under the FDA's new, relaxed restrictions. Those who were previously deferred from donating due to military travel, travel to areas where malaria is present, tattoos and piercings will now be welcomed to help save lives across Western New York. These changes are a result of concerns about the nation-wide blood shortages caused by COVID-19.

While ConnectLife was in a comfortable place with the blood supply throughout April thanks to many generous donors, we are once again heading in a direction where a threatened blood supply is inevitable. Since the end of May hospital need for blood has increased over 20%, and is actually higher than it was pre-pandemic. This is due to an increase in traumas and an increase in surgeries. We anticipate that throughout the remainder of June utilization will only continue to increase. ConnectLife distributes approximately 700 red cells and 100 platelets per week to our partner hospitals. This means that we need over 100 donors every day to meet this need.

ConnectLife is the primary supplier of blood products to Oishei Children's Hospital, Buffalo General Medical Center, Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital, Degraff Memorial Hospital, ECMC, Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, Eastern Niagara Hospital, Wyoming County Community Health System, Olean General Hospital, Brooks-TLC Health System in Dunkirk and Bradford Regional Medical Center. As WNY's only community blood bank it is our responsibility to answer the call for blood products to ANY hospital in need, but we will need help from blood donors to do that.

We are optimistic at ConnectLife that the updated FDA guidelines will help to increase donations, while ensuring a safe and stable blood supply for our hospitals. There is a constant need for blood and we need those who are able to donate on a regular basis, every 56 days. Individuals who were previously deferred from donating for travel, tattoos or piercings are encouraged to contact ConnectLife if they are interested in donating.

For more information and to make an appointment to donate please visit www.ConnectLifeGiveBlood.org or call 716.529.4270.

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Unyts is now ConnectLife! ConnectLife helps people help others. As a federally designated not-for-profit organ procurement organization and community blood bank, we save and enhance lives through organ, eye, tissue and blood donations. Visit us online at www.ConnectLife.org or Facebook @weconnectlife.