



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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As WNY reopens local blood supply is once again threatened

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic ConnectLife was deeply concerned about looming blood shortages as a result of cancelled drives and stay at home orders. WNY's only community blood bank put out a call for donors and saw a surge from those wanting to give back. Concerns are heightened again though as WNY starts to reopen, and ConnectLife fears that a threatened blood supply is inevitable.

Over the past week, hospital need for blood has increased by 22%. ConnectLife anticipates that throughout the remainder of May utilization will only continue to increase as surgeries resume and hospital census increases. For the dates of May 18th to May 30th, 23 blood drives have cancelled and we continue to see a decline in appointments scheduled. Heading into the Memorial Day weekend there will be **less than a 5-day supply of blood** on the shelves. All of the blood collected through generous donations in March and April have already been used in our local hospitals, and ConnectLife needs the community's support to ensure local patients have the blood they need. There is a constant need for blood and we need those who are able to donate on a regular basis, every 56 days.

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.

To practice social distancing, all donor wait chairs, screens, beds, and refreshment chairs are placed 6 feet apart. All surfaces are being sanitized between every donation. ConnectLife asks that all blood donors wear a mask when presenting to donate to respect others and our staff and to keep everyone safe. If you do not have a mask, a disposable one will be provided to

you during your donation. Information and resources on COVID-19, blood donation, and social distancing can be found [here](#).

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.