

Commander's Call Topics



January 16, 2014

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

Martin Luther King, Jr.
American pastor, activist and humanitarian

"What are you doing for others?"

[Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

[Day of Service](#)

January 20, 2014

15 minutes all it takes to save a life

Since 1970, January has been designated as national Blood Donor Month, selected for the time of the year when donations—and reserves--tend to be at their lowest. This year, an earlier-than-usual flu season and the extremely cold weather have pushed the reserves even lower than in past years. With a national requirement of providing blood to someone in the U.S. every two seconds, equating to about 44,000 donations needed each day, it's easy to see why the topic needs to be on the national agenda.

Close to 10 million Americans give more than 16 million times during the year, representing only about 10 percent of the 38 percent of Americans eligible to give blood. According to the American Red Cross, here are some facts and figures that may help you decide whether or not you make a good candidate for blood donation, why it's safe and why it's such a good cause:

Donating blood is a safe process. A sterile needle is used only once for each donor and is then discarded. Donation is a simple four-step process: registration, medical history and mini-physical, donation and follow-up refreshments.

The actual donation only takes about 10 to 15 minutes, and usually only one pint of blood is drawn. With the body holding about 10 pints of blood, there's no danger of "giving too much." A healthy donor may donate red blood cells as often as every 56 days, and for platelets, as few as seven days apart.

Blood and its useable components cannot be artificially made, and donating blood helps patients in several ways. There are four types of transfusable products derived from donations: red cells, platelets, plasma and cryoprecipitate. Typically, two or three of these products can be extracted from each donation, meaning multiple lives can be saved from just a single pint of blood.

Of all the blood types needed, the greatest is for O-negative. Only about 7 percent of Americans have this type and this type is considered the universal blood type and can be given to all types. Close to half of all Americans have type O positive and those with AB positive represent about 3 percent of the population and are considered universal donors of plasma.

With the need for blood donations so great—one in seven people entering the hospital will use blood, and every two seconds someone in the United States needs blood—here's a great example of just one person making a dramatic difference: According to the American Red Cross, if a person began donating blood at age 17 and donated every 56 days until age 76, that one person would have donated 48 gallons of blood. That's enough to save more than 1,000 lives.

What are you waiting for?

► TRENDING...

"This was a failure of some of our Airman. It was not a failure of the nuclear mission," said Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James noting that 34 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) officers at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont. have been implicated in [cheating on the ICBM launch proficiency test](#).

► RESOURCES

Website access to the following resources can be gained by clicking on the name.

[AF.mil](#)

[Airman magazine](#)

[Air Force Outreach](#)

[Military OneSource/HomeFront](#)

[Air Force Personnel Center](#)

[Air Reserve Personnel Center](#)

[Department of Defense News](#)

[Department of Veteran Affairs](#)

[TRICARE](#)

[U.S. Government Website](#)

[Air Force Association Scholarships](#)

[Air Force Safety Center](#)

[Civil Service Employment Opportunities](#)

[NAF Employment Opportunities](#)

► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

Jan. 16, 1981 - From Corpus Christi, Texas, and Little Rock AFB, Ark., Military Airlift Command C-130s moved 500 tons of arms, ammunition, helicopters, and other material to San Salvador to support the Salvadoran government in its struggle against leftist guerrillas. This operation lasted through June.

Jan. 17, 1932 - After a severe snowstorm, seven aircraft from the 11th Bomb Squadron flew missions for 4 days to deliver supplies to Navajo Indians near Winslow, Ariz. Lieutenant Charles H. Howard received the Mackay Trophy for this effort.

Jan. 18, 1905 - Through their congressman, the Wright Brothers opened negotiations with the U.S. Government to build an aircraft. The government, however, refused the offer.

Jan. 19, 1976 - The 180th Tactical Fighter Group became the first Air National Guard unit to participate in a Red Flag exercise at Nellis AFB, Nev.

Jan. 20, 1960 - Early in January, the Soviet Union announced tests of more powerful rockets. Through Jan. 22, Pacific Air Forces employed KC-135, C-130, and RB-69 (P2V-7) aircraft to observe these tests.

Jan. 21, 1991 – During Operation Desert Storm, Capt Paul T. Johnson in his A-10 Thunderbolt II found a downed Navy fighter pilot, who had ejected in Iraqi territory. Johnson destroyed a threatening Iraqi truck, which allowed an Air Force MH-53J Pave Low helicopter to rescue the pilot. For his efforts, Johnson received an Air Force Cross.

Jan. 22, 1964 - The Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird first flew.

► CURRENT ISSUES

[Hagel visits Airmen, stresses importance of mission, gratitude](#)

Noting Airmen's professionalism, commitment and attitude, the Secretary stressed that it is important for leadership to make base visits and learn first-hand how the job is done.

► FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY

[Ease landlord disputes with few easy steps](#)

For many Airmen, moving up means moving on. Knowing what you and your landlord can expect from each other paves the way to a smoother transition.

[TRICARE ends walk-in admin services at 189 facilities](#)

Starting April 1, all 189 U.S. TRICARE service centers will close. Administrative tasks can be accomplished online or by phone and medical benefits and health care service will not be affected.

[Sesame Street book teaches kids resilience](#)

A collaboration between the Defense Department and Sesame Street produces a book-and-DVD combination to help children learn coping habits now as a foundation for life skills.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[Sexual assault reports drop at service academies](#)

The biennial anonymous survey that is the basis for the report combined with establishing special victims' counsels provide a clearer picture of incidence of sexual assault in the military.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit <http://www.airforcehistory.af.mil>

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