

This Holiday Season, Give The Gift Of Life

(NAPSA)—As you create your gift list for family and friends this holiday season, consider giving one of the best gifts possible—donate blood.

Every three seconds, someone needs blood. The demand for blood is greater today than ever, and our supply needs constant replenishment. Donated blood will assist accident victims, people undergoing surgery, and patients receiving treatment for leukemia, cancer and other diseases. Each year, more than four million Americans need blood transfusions. One individual who has suffered massive blood loss may require transfusions of more than 50 pints of red blood cells.

Blood donors are needed throughout the year, but they are most needed during the holidays. It is during these times that the number of donations declines while the demand continues or even increases. Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, Americans donated blood in record numbers. However, blood is a perishable commodity. The shelf life is only 42 days and the blood reserves must be replenished daily.

Anyone who is in good health, is at least 17 years of age, and weighs at least 110 pounds may donate blood every 56 days. Blood donation entails four easy steps:



brief medical history, quick physical, donation, and snacks. The actual blood collection takes 10 to 20 minutes. The entire process from the time you sign in, to the time you leave is approximately 45 minutes.

Too many Americans wait until they need blood before they truly realize the importance of volunteer blood donation. Donating blood saves lives—pint-by-pint. Just one donation can save up to three lives. It may not be your neighbor, your co-worker, or your best friend who needs your blood today—but someone does. You give the gift of life when you give blood.

For additional information contact the American Association of Blood Banks at 301-907-6977 or www.aabb.org.