

UCLA COVID-19 Convalescent Serum Project Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is convalescent plasma?

Convalescent plasma is the liquid part of blood collected from patients who have recovered from an infection. Antibodies are special proteins in the plasma that have the potential to be used to fight the infection.

Why is convalescent plasma being investigated to treat COVID-19?

There is currently no approved treatment for COVID-19. Convalescent plasma is being investigated for the treatment of COVID -19 because there is some information gained from prior scientific studies to suggest it might help individuals recover from COVID-19. Further investigation is still necessary to determine if convalescent plasma might shorten the duration of illness, reduce morbidity, or prevent death associated with COVID-19.

Is convalescent plasma safe and effective against COVID-19?

It is not known if convalescent plasma will be an effective treatment against COVID-19. Plasma transfusions are generally safe and well-tolerated by most patients but can occasionally cause allergic reactions and other side effects. It is also not known whether patients with COVID-19 will have other types of reactions to convalescent plasma.

While it is not known if convalescent plasma is safe and effective against COVID-19, there is anecdotal evidence to support that convalescent plasma is safe for patients. Because there are no approved treatments, FDA is permitting the emergency investigational use of convalescent plasma to treat COVID-19 under the criteria of the emergency IND or Investigational New Drug.

I recently recovered from COVID-19, can I donate convalescent plasma?

Yes. However, COVID-19 convalescent plasma may be collected from individuals **only** if they are **recovered** and eligible to donate blood. Individuals must have had a prior diagnosis of COVID-19 documented by a laboratory test and meet other laboratory criteria. Individuals must have fully recovered from COVID-19, with complete resolution of symptoms **for at least 14 days** before donation of convalescent plasma.

Who should I contact if I want to donate convalescent plasma?

If you are interested in participating in the study, please fill out the [intake survey](#). If, based on your responses to the survey, you are able to donate, we will contact you within 1 week to give you more information about donating and set up an appointment for screening lab tests.

How do we determine if people are eligible to donate blood?

We will ask you a series of health screening questions and collect specimens for laboratory testing. Our health questionnaire and laboratory screening are designed to identify donors who are recovered from COVID-19 infection and meet standard blood donor eligibility requirements.

Can I donate blood if I've traveled recently?

We currently ask each donor about recent travel to regions where there is a higher risk for transfusion transmitted infections such as malaria and other diseases. FDA has not established this same kind of requirement for the Coronavirus since it is not known to be transmitted by blood. However, individuals who are told by public health officials to self-quarantine due to travel related coronavirus exposure should not donate blood while they are in quarantine status. This is for the protection of our staff and other blood donors.

What measures are being taken to make sure donor centers are virus-free?

We ask blood donors and our own staff to stay home if they are not feeling well. Our blood collection sites are taking the following safety measures to help protect our staff and our donors:

- Follow a donation-by-appointment policy.
- Limit donor center access to individuals with appointments who are not accompanied by others.
- Enforce donor self-deferral for donors who are at increased risk for COVID-19. Self-deferral information is listed at <https://www.uclahealth.org/gotblood>
- Ask donors to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after donation.
- Give donors more space during the entire process by increasing the distance between donors in the screening, collection and refreshment areas.
- Give donors increased spacing during the donation process.
- Follow procedures for cleaning and disinfecting all areas and increase the frequency, such as cleaning the donor bed and other surfaces in the collection area after each donor.
- Increase the frequency for cleaning and disinfecting the donor screening and refreshment areas, restrooms, doorknobs and other surfaces.
- Serve each donor individually wrapped snacks and drinks, limiting exposure to the supply, rather than allowing all donors access to the supply of snacks and drinks.

Can I catch Coronavirus by donating blood?

No. Donating blood is safe. We always use new, sterile needles that are discarded after use.



Can I donate blood while I'm sick?

No, you are not eligible to donate if you're experiencing a fever, cold, sore throat, respiratory infection or flu-like symptoms.

Do you test blood before it goes to recipients?

All donated blood, even donations from repeat donors, is tested for blood type, hepatitis, HIV, syphilis, and other transfusion transmissible diseases.

Can you catch Coronavirus from receiving a blood transfusion?

There is no evidence that coronaviruses are transmitted by blood transfusion. Furthermore, pre-donation screening procedures are designed to prevent donations from people who are experiencing symptoms of respiratory illnesses.

Can I bring my kids with me to the donor centers when I donate?

Normally, we welcome children that come with their parents, but as we are trying to manage donor spacing, please leave your children at home.

For more information please refer to the [FDA Information for Investigational COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma Website](#)

WHO CAN I CONTACT IF I HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS THIS STUDY?

Please email convalescentserum@mednet.ucla.edu for information about participating in the UCLA COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma Project.

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, you may contact the UCLA OHRPP by phone: (310) 825-5344; by email: mirb@research.ucla.edu or U.S. mail: UCLA OHRPP, 11000 Kinross Ave., Suite 211, Box 951694, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694.