

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AB BLOOD PLASMA SAVES SOLDIER'S LIVES
Florida Blood Services ships additional donor plasma for trauma care

(St. Petersburg, FL: 10/30/06) Florida Blood Services (FBS), has been asked by the US military to ship 15 units a week of Type AB fresh frozen plasma (FFP) for the next 6 weeks to help save the lives of injured soldiers. Shipments will be packaged on dry ice and sent by FedEx from the FBS depot, located at 10100 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St. North in St. Petersburg, to the Armed Services Whole Blood Processing Laboratory East. At 1 pm on Wednesdays, November 8, 15, 22 & 29 as well as December 6 & 13, 2006, the Type AB FFP will be shipped.

FBS, as a member of America's Blood Centers (ABC), is one of seven hubs being asked by the Armed Services Blood Program Office (ASBPO) to ship a total of 600 units of fresh frozen Type AB plasma over the next six weeks. "The AB FFP that has been ordered and we are sending is for use in Iraq and Afghanistan where they are using it at the first medical intervention station. The trauma surgeons have noted an increased survival when plasma is used at the earliest stages of treatment. There are no laboratory capabilities at these units therefore, they have no ABO typing capabilities. Hence they have to use AB FFP," said Ruth Sylvester, ABC Director of Regulatory Affairs. "From what I am told, they thaw the plasma and leave it refrigerated ready for the next casualty," said Sylvester.

"The AB blood type serves as the universal donor for the FFP product. Only four out of every 100 people have Type AB blood, and therefore the red blood cell demand for use by Type AB patients is also rare. The best way for Type AB donors to help patients is to donate their universal plasma. It is a great responsibility for our Type AB donors to donate their plasma not only for our local trauma patients, but also for our military troops in combat. Type AB donors can be lifesaving heroes to American troops stationed overseas," said Gaskins.

Plasma donors must be 17 years old, weigh a minimum of 110 lbs. and be in good health. They can donate as often as once a month. Prospective Type AB plasma donors are asked to call 1-800-68-BLOOD (25663) to find a suitable donation location near them and schedule an appointment.

Florida Blood Services provides for the plasma, platelet and blood needs of patients at 38 hospitals in Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco and Pinellas Counties through the participation of volunteer blood donors. Approximately 750 donations are required daily, due to the high quality of medical care in Tampa Bay that serves the most critically ill patients throughout West Central Florida.

Additional blood supply information can be found at www.fbsblood.org

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