

This is Dee and Jo Anna from the Northern CA Community Blood Bank with your KINS Community Comment.

Graduation, Gardening, Crabs Baseball, Sun, Vacations. Yes, summer is here in Humboldt County and that means different things to different people. At the Blood Bank we start thinking about ways to make sure we meet the needs of the patients we serve. BBQ for Family Night on Wednesday, Bloodmobiles at Saturday events and fun things happening at the Blood Bank are all ways to get people's attention but the bottom line is that we need members of the community or we can't do what we need to do. We need all of our blood donors to donate twice this summer, we need 1,000 people who have never donated before to walk onto a bloodmobile or into the blood bank.

We are in pursuit of a safe and adequate blood supply, which truly makes a difference in people's lives. The hope you give to a patient or their family when you donate is perhaps the most precious gift of all. Your dedication today provides hope and healing for tomorrow.

The blood that saves lives is the blood that is on the shelf when it is needed. If you are type O, it is your blood type that is used first, before a patient is typed, in emergency situations. If you are type O+ you are the most common blood type, and therefore the most commonly used. What I'm saying is, you are needed.

Jo Anna mentioned the things that we need to do to maintain our Red Cell and Plasma needs but we also, as always, are keenly aware of the changing needs in the medical community.

There is currently a trend driving an increase in the use of the platelet component of the blood. This increased need for platelets is being driven by patient need and new therapies that only use platelets.

The most efficient way to collect platelets is by apheresis, a process that utilizes a machine with a centrifuge that collects the part of the blood desired, and returns the rest to the donor. While this process takes longer, it is generally easier on the donor when only the desired component is removed. If you are able and willing to donate blood, we may ask you to consider saving lives another way.....through platelet donation.

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