

During this season of giving, consider donating blood

The need for ALL blood types and donors continues. Our local blood supply is running critically low. We are calling every Western New Yorker who is healthy and eligible to donate blood.

As a thank you for helping us save lives, November donors will receive an exclusive Buffalo Sabres winter hat. In addition, ITAC will be providing each donor with an ITAC stress ball.

ITAC - It Takes a Community Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coalition, Iroquois High School Donate Life Club and ConnectLife will be hosting a mobile unit community blood drive from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 21, at Iroquois High School, 2111 Girdle Road, in the Middle School parking lot.

ITAC's mission focuses on education about and prevention of substance use, and enhancing protective factors associated with reduced risk of substance use. Protective factors are individual or environmental characteristics, conditions or behaviors that reduce the effects of stressful life

events. These factors also increase an individual's ability to avoid risks or hazards and promote social and emotional competence to thrive in all aspects of life, now and in the future. Providing our community with an opportunity to donate blood is supporting overall resiliency and creating an awareness and access to community health and wellness services — all strong protective factors aiding in our mission.

Local hospitals rely on a ready source of blood in order to care for and treat patients on a daily basis. ConnectLife, WNY's only organ, eye, tissue and community blood center, has seen a decline in local blood donation due to fear of COVID-19, and concerns are growing about our low blood supply.

Blood donors must be healthy, feeling well and free of respiratory illness symptoms to be eligi-

ble to donate.

ConnectLife is the primary supplier of blood products to hospitals across the area. As Western New York's only community blood bank, it is our responsibility to answer the call for blood products to any hospital in need, but we will need help from blood donors to do that.

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, there have been no reported or suspected cases of transfusion-transmitted COVID-19 to date. It poses no known risk to the safety of the nation's blood supply and does not pose any known risk to patients receiving blood transfusions.

To make an appointment to donate, please visit www.ConnectLifeGiveBlood.org or call 529-4270. Please like us on Facebook, and follow us on Twitter and Instagram ITAC - It Takes a Community.

