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redcrossblood.org

New SleevesUp website from the American Red Cross lets supporters host virtual blood drives

Cabot teen one of the first in the nation to host virtual drive

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Jan. 28, 2015) — January is National Blood Donor Month and this year, American Red Cross supporters have a new way to help save lives through blood and platelet donation with SleevesUp virtual blood drives.

SleevesUp is a first-of-its-kind website that lets those who feel passionate about blood donation create a virtual blood drive and encourage colleagues, friends and family members to give blood or platelets, or make a financial donation to support their campaign. SleevesUp campaigns allow people to honor someone's life, celebrate a special occasion or simply bring others together to help save lives — any time of the year — regardless of location.

One of the first SleevesUp drives in the nation is in honor of Barrett Stark, a Cabot teen with leukemia. Barrett's mom, Polly Pettey, encourages people here in Arkansas and across the nation to roll up a sleeve and take part in this virtual blood drive. "You are giving life! Even if your donation gives someone just one more day with someone they love, that is so worth it. Sleeves up!"



Barrett Stark with Cabot Junior High North football team

Barrett began his battle with leukemia in April. Since his diagnosis, he has undergone chemotherapy, bone marrow transplants and other treatments. Barrett received dozens of blood and platelet transfusions so far and faces at least two and a half more years of treatment.

Principal of Cabot Junior High North, Michael Byrd says even through hardship, the 8th grader has remained positive. "He always has a smile on his face. It is inspiring to see his strength."

As a member of the Cabot Junior High North football team, Barrett's determination off the field has also inspired his team and coach, Danny Spencer. "This young man has great determination. That's one of the many things that will help him beat this illness. He is very courageous," said Spencer. "I look forward to seeing him rejoin our team and his CJHN family."

Sleeves Up for Barrett Stark

redcrossblood.org/SleevesUp-for-Barrett/#

100 days

100 pledges to donate

About SleevesUp

A SleevesUp virtual blood drive can be created online at redcrossblood.org/SleevesUp in just a few minutes. Once a campaign is created, others can pledge their support immediately by making an appointment to donate blood or platelets at a blood drive or donation center convenient for them. Those who are not eligible to give blood, do not have a Red Cross blood donation opportunity near them or simply want to do more can also support a SleevesUp campaign by making a financial donation to the Red Cross Blood Services.

SleevesUp is one of many ways individuals and groups can celebrate National Blood Donor Month, which has been observed in January since 1970 and recognizes the importance of giving blood and platelets while honoring those who roll up a sleeve to help patients in need. The winter months can be especially difficult to collect enough blood and platelets to meet patient needs. Inclement weather can result in blood drive cancellations, and seasonal illnesses, like the flu, can prevent some donors from making or keeping appointments to give.

Blood donors with all blood types, particularly O negative, A negative and B negative, and platelet donors are encouraged to make an appointment to give. In addition, individuals are encouraged to check out SleevesUp and invite others to join them in making a lifesaving donation. More information about SleevesUp is available at redcrossblood.org/SleevesUp.

How to donate blood

Simply download the American Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) to make an appointment or for more information. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age (16 with parental consent in some states), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

About the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](https://twitter.com/RedCross).