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SANBS urges donors to donate as blood stocks come under pressure

Johannesburg, 4 September 2026 – The South African National Blood Service (SANBS) is calling on eligible South Africans to donate blood amid declining national blood stocks.

SANBS aims to maintain a five-day blood supply to ensure hospitals have access to blood when patients need it. To meet daily demand, SANBS needs to collect 3,500 units of blood each day. However, current collections are falling short of this target, placing continued pressure on the national blood supply.

Several factors are contributing to lower collections, including fewer blood drives at schools and universities during the examination period and competing demands on donors' time. However, addressing the current need requires more than regular donors alone.

SANBS is calling on three groups to step forward: donors who are due to donate, people who have never donated before, and lapsed donors who are able to return to donating.

While students are understandably focused on their examinations, the need for blood continues every day. Mothers give birth, patients undergo surgery, accident and trauma victims require emergency care, and people receiving ongoing treatment depend on a safe and sufficient supply of blood.

"We are appealing to all eligible South Africans to make time to donate – whether you are a regular donor who is due, considering donating for the first time, or a previous donor who has not donated for some time," says Monique Schreiner, Senior Manager: Donor Relations at SANBS.

"Whether you're returning to donate or considering giving blood for the first time, your decision can make a meaningful difference. Every donor helps strengthen our blood supply and gives patients the hope of another tomorrow."

SANBS is particularly encouraging O and B blood group donors who are due to donate to come forward as these groups contribute significantly to the stability of the national blood supply:

sanbs.org.za
Toll free 0800 11 9031

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Universal Blood Type



Donates to Everyone

Receives from 

- O negative is the universal blood type used in emergencies.
- Group B contributes significantly to maintaining balanced stock for specific patient groups.

However, SANBS emphasises that all blood groups are welcome and needed.

"Blood cannot be manufactured. It can only come from people who choose to give. A single donation takes about 30 minutes and can save up to three lives," adds Schreiner.

The need continues. Lives cannot wait. If you are eligible to donate, now is the time to step forward and give blood.

Visit your nearest SANBS donor centre or blood drive and donate. For more information or to find your nearest donor centre or mobile blood drive, contact the SANBS toll free line on 0800 11 90 31 or visit www.sanbs.org.za

Be the Lifeline. Donate today.

Stay connected with SANBS on social media:

- X (@theSANBS)
- Facebook (@SANBS)
- Instagram (@thesanbs)
- TikTok (@thesanbs)

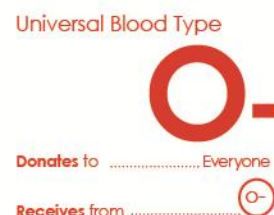
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ABOUT SANBS

The South African National Blood Service (SANBS) is an independent non-profit organisation and a leader in blood transfusion. SANBS operates in eight of the nine provinces in South Africa (excluding the Western Cape, which is served by the Western Cape Blood Service) and provides crucial support to countries in the SADC region.

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The organisation prides itself on being the lifeblood of South Africa's healthcare system, providing over one million world-class blood products annually. This pedigree comes from world-class testing and collection protocols, ensuring a safe supply for patients. SANBS operates a vast network of donor centres, including more than 60 fixed centres and over 100 mobile collection sites daily.

SANBS aims to collect 3,500 units of blood daily to ensure a safe and sufficient supply for South Africa's healthcare system. Regular donations are critical because a unit of blood lasts only 42 days. We encourage donors to commit to giving blood regularly, ensuring a continuous supply for those in need.

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