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## Sickle Cell Disease Warriors and Friends

Georgia Health Policy Center

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**REdHHoTT**

Improving transfusion practice through  
data sharing and education

## Sickle Cell Disease Warriors and Friends:

Be the Motivation for blood donation!

Most people don't know receiving blood is an important treatment for individuals with sickle cell disease.

And because they don't know... they don't donate!

Motivate your friends, family, and coworkers to donate blood.

Become an ambassador today!

### To be an ambassador all you need to do is:

#### Share Your Story!

- Be creative and tell your story through a poem, song, artwork, etc.
- Write a post or share an article, picture, or image about blood donation twice a month on social media.
- Ask someone to give the gift of life, by donating blood.

#### Spread the Word!

- Distribute local blood drive flyers at an event (e.g., cookout, family reunion, or community meeting)
- Invite a few family members or friends to become ambassadors.
- Support a family member or friend and go with them as they donate blood.

#### Make a Change!

- Write or call a state legislator and tell them about sickle cell disease, blood donation, and the Be the Motivation initiative.
- Be a volunteer at a local blood drive.
- Contact a blood center and host a blood drive.

#### **FACT:**

Blood from an African-American donor to an African-American recipient is more likely to match.

#### **SIGN UP HERE**

for more tips and resources to Be the Motivation and support the sickle cell community.

<http://bit.ly/BTMotivate>

## Here are some helpful conversation tips to get you started!

### “Why should I donate blood?”

- Donating blood is important for people who have sickle cell disease. Individuals with sickle cell disease need blood donations to help prevent health problems (like strokes) and live healthier lives!

### “Why are donations from African-Americans so important?”

- There is a shortage of blood donors across the nation, especially, from African-Americans and other minority groups.
- Less than 1% of all blood donations come from African-Americans.
- Blood from an African-American donor to an African-American recipient is more likely to match. A better match makes a healthier recipient!

### “I would but... I’m scared of needles. And I don’t want them to give me something!”

- Yes, there is a needle involved, but think about all the people you will help. You can save a life!
- The needle pinch won’t last long.
- Giving blood is a safe process and you cannot get a disease by donating blood.

### “I don’t have time to donate blood. I’ll do it next time.”

- From start to finish, donating blood only takes about an hour.
- Most blood centers allow you to schedule an appointment. Here’s information for the next blood drive and the phone number to our local blood center\_\_\_\_\_.

### “I tried to donate blood, but they told me my iron was too low to donate.”

- If you couldn’t donate blood in the past because of low iron, you can try again! Try eating foods high in iron, like red meat, spinach, or beans. You may need vitamin supplements. See your doctor, as there may be others causes of low hemoglobin.

### “I have high blood pressure.” “I have diabetes.”

- Most people with high blood pressure or diabetes can still donate blood.

### “Will the blood go to you? Or somebody else?”

- Some blood centers, like LifeSouth, have programs where the blood only goes to sickle cell patients. If you donate blood, you are helping everyone... and by helping everyone you are helping me!

#### **FACT:**

People are more likely to donate blood if you ask them to donate!

**Be the Motivation for blood donation!**