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**NEWS  
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# Recovered COVID-19 Patients Urged to Donate Plasma

## Health Officials Stress Importance of Convalescent Plasma

**EL PASO, Texas** – While the number of COVID-19 cases in El Paso continues to climb, more than 70 percent of the people who tested positive have recovered. Local leaders are asking the more than 9,000 residents who have recovered from the virus to consider donating plasma to help our community.

The objective is to provide patients who have severe cases of the disease with a transfusion of the plasma that contains COVID-19 antibodies which may help them overcome their illness.

“We have to remember that the reason this virus is so serious is that unless we have had the disease, our bodies do not have the proper antibodies to fight it,” said Dr. Hector Ocaranza, Local City-County Health Authority. “El Pasoans are known for their generous response when faced with a crisis and so we are asking that COVID-19 patients, who have recovered, to consider donating what might be lifesaving plasma.”

Donations can be made via Vitalant, which is one of the nation’s oldest and largest nonprofit community blood service providers.

Donors must have a prior laboratory diagnosis of COVID-19, either by a positive swab test OR a positive test for SARS-CoV-2 antibodies. They must also complete resolution of symptoms for at least 28 days and meet all other donor eligibility for an automated plasma donation.

More information and the donor questionnaire can be found at: <http://learn.vitalant.org/convalescentplasma>. Potential donors who have questions may call 866-CV-PLSMA (866-287-5762).

Using convalescent plasma is not a new form of treatment for diseases. The concept goes back to the 1880s. The Food and Drug Administration is allowing the transfusion of convalescent plasma as an investigational treatment, and it is currently the only antibody treatment available for COVID-19 patients.

Vitalant is working with hospitals to collect, process and distribute the plasma for treatment in patients with active, serious COVID-19 infections.

For more information on Vitalant and convalescent blood transfusions visit: <https://www.vitalant.org/covidFree>. For more information about the City of El Paso’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, visit [www.EPstrong.org](http://www.EPstrong.org).

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