

# Suncoast Communities Blood Bank

A Not-For-Profit Community-Supported Blood Bank

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 9, 2008

## Contact:

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## MEDIA ALERT

**Sarasota**-Suncoast Communities Blood Bank (SCBB) is making an advanced effort to avert an imminent critical blood shortage. Current local demand for blood is soaring due to an uncharacteristically high volume of open heart surgeries this week compounded by today's horrific traffic accident on Interstate 4 in Lakeland. Suncoast Communities Blood Bank is asking the media's help to alert the public that blood donations are needed to prevent a critical shortage.

Several factors are contributing to the dramatic decrease in the local blood supply. Nine patients are undergoing open heart surgery today alone at Sarasota Memorial Hospital requiring great amounts of blood. Two open heart surgeries earlier this week required 80 units of blood. Additionally, SCBB has been asked to respond to the traffic disaster that occurred in Lakeland this morning on I-4. SCBB was contacted by the blood center in Lakeland to aid with any available blood units for trauma victims.

"SMH is seeing an unusually high amount of open heart surgeries today. On a daily basis, there are typically four to five patients who have this type of surgery. These increases in major surgeries as well as the influx of seasonal visitor demands are affecting the blood supply," says Chris Flood, Director of Laboratory Services and Transfusion Medicine for Suncoast Communities Blood Bank.

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This higher number of open heart surgeries also results in a critical need for platelets. Currently, SCBB has only two units of platelets available on-hand for open heart surgery and cancer patients who rely on the clot-building portions of the blood.

“We have called other blood centers in southwest Florida requesting their support,” explains Flood. “However, everyone’s blood supplies are low due to just coming out of the holiday season.” SCBB strives to collect 100 units of blood daily to meet the demands of the five hospitals it serves in the region.

Assistance from the public is crucial to keep the local blood supply strong and to prevent a major shortage. SCBB asks all residents, 16 years of age and older, to please visit a bloodmobile or any of SCBB’s locations within the next 36 to 48 hours. The bloodmobile listing can be found by visiting [www.scbb.org](http://www.scbb.org). Three main locations listed are open for donors. Walk-ins are welcome or donors may call 1-866-97BLOOD (1-866-972-5663) for an appointment.

1760 Mound Street  
Sarasota

Hours: Monday through Thursdays 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

1097 N. Tamiami Trail  
Nokomis

Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
Friday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

710 N. Brevard Avenue  
Arcadia

Hours: Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

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