FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Keeping Our Blood Supply Safe Amid Zika Virus Outbreak

February 5, 2016 - Appleton, WI – The Community Blood Center is implementing proactive measures to ensure the safety of the blood supply amid the Zika virus outbreak. The Zika Virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito, and can be present in the blood of an infected person who has no visible symptoms. If symptoms are present, they are usually mild and only last several days to a week.

“The Zika Virus has the potential to infect anyone who travels to endemic areas of the world. Many of our donors do travel to these areas for vacations or business. Since most people infected with the virus do not show symptoms, asking those with recent travel to refrain from donation for 28 days after returning allows enough time for the body to clear any potential infection.” said Dr. Todd Straus, Chief Medical Officer & Vice President, Quality & Medical Services.

With the outbreak of Zika, and to reduce the potential transmission of this virus, all blood donors are being asked to wait 28 days to give blood after their return to the United States if they have traveled to Mexico, the Caribbean, and or Central or South America*.

Beyond its normal blood safety measures and pre-donation health screening, The Community Blood Center is implementing additional safety measures by asking donors who have traveled in these areas to not only self-defer, but to notify the center if they develop any symptoms related to the Zika virus, including fever, rash, red eyes, and muscle/joint pain within 14 days of their donation.

If you have not traveled to these areas, we ask that you would consider making an appointment to assist in recovering from the anticipated loss of up to 3% of our normal donor base.

Donating blood is a great way to connect lives and share life, and we ask that all presenting donors keep the safety of others in mind when thinking about giving blood. “At The Community Blood Center, we supply the safest blood product we can. Although we do not want to turn blood donors away, the safety of our hospitals and patients is first and foremost.” said Kris Belanger, Vice President, Donor Services.

To schedule an appointment, please contact CBC at (800) 280-4102 or visit www.communityblood.org.


Since 1955, the Community Blood Center has provided Wisconsin hospitals with a safe, steady blood supply. The nonprofit blood center is committed to providing a reliable blood supply for hospitals in the Fox Valley and beyond. The Community Blood Center has donor centers in Appleton, Oshkosh, and Little Chute and holds over 100 blood drives every month. Blood donors must be at least 17 years old (16 with parental permission), weigh at least 110 pounds, be in general good health, and bring a photo ID. Donors are encouraged to eat a regular meal and drink plenty of fluids prior to donating. For more information on how you can donate blood or host a blood drive please visit www.communityblood.org or call 800-280-4102.