



"Quality Care Close to Home"

800 East Highway 71
Smithville, Texas 78957

SMITHVILLE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY NEWS
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 2003 is National Volunteer Blood Donor Month

Since 1970, January has been declared National Volunteer Blood Donor Month. To help ensure an adequate blood supply, Smithville Regional Hospital has joined with the American Association of Blood Banks to stress the importance of giving the gift of life through the donation of blood.

According to Sharon Nokes, Hospital Laboratory Manager, the need for blood is constant, and volunteer blood donors contribute to nearly all the blood used for patient care in the United States. "If all who are eligible to donate would do so on a regular basis (three to four times per year), blood needs could be met and shortages could become a thing of the past," said Nokes.

Everyone, whether it is realized or not, depends on blood. Every three seconds, someone needs blood. Each day, patients across the country receive approximately 34,000 units of this life-saving resource. This year alone, as many as four million patients will require blood transfusions as accident victims, people undergoing surgery and patients receiving treatment for leukemia, cancer and other diseases.

Volunteer donors must be at least 17 years old and weigh at least 110 pounds. Donors need to be in good health, and will need to be able to pass a brief physical and health history prior to donating.

People who are interested in becoming blood donors should call the Hospital Laboratory at 512/237-5769 or toll free at 1-866-360-3219 ext. 769 to schedule an appointment for Wednesday, January 29th to *Give Blood...The Gift of Life*.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
MARKETING DEPARTMENT
SMITHVILLE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY
512-360-2121