

World Blood Donor Day

"Celebrating your gift of blood." 14 JUNE 2005

Announcing World Blood Donor Day, 14 June 2005!

This is an open invitation for your participation in World Blood Donor Day 2005, which will build on the outstanding success of the inaugural World Blood Donor Day held this year which resulted in a wonderful international tribute to voluntary blood donors.

World Blood Donor Day is coordinated and sponsored by the close association of three major organizations working for the advancement of voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation: the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Federation of Blood Donor Organizations and the International Society of Blood Transfusion. These collaborating parties have been joined by the World Health Organization and between them these organizations represent 192 Member States, 181 national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 50 voluntary blood donor organizations and blood transfusion specialists throughout the world. World Blood Donor Day is not intended to replace events such as national Blood Donor Days, but it provides a special opportunity for a united, global celebration on a day that has particular significance: 14 June, the birthdate of Karl Landsteiner, the Nobel prize winner who discovered the ABO blood group system.

The collaborating parties have established a Steering Committee to plan activities at global and regional level to support national activities, which this year resulted in more than 70 countries participating in a wide variety of activities including community awareness campaigns, donor recognition ceremonies, poster competitions, Blood Centre Open Days and fun events. During the period of preparation for World Blood Donor Day 2005, the special World Blood Donor Day dedicated website will be regularly updated. We invite you to contribute to the global celebration of voluntary blood donors by sharing your own ideas, resource materials and plans for activities through this (www.wbdd.org) or direct communication with the collaborating parties. To support national activities all countries will receive a campaign kit and media pack over the coming months but in the meanwhile information can be readily downloaded from the web site.

World Blood Donor Day provides a unique opportunity to give thanks to those very special people who give their blood voluntarily and for altruistic reasons. Evidence from around the world demonstrates that voluntary, unpaid donors are the foundation of a safe blood supply because they are least likely to transmit potentially life-threatening infections, such as HIV and hepatitis viruses, through their blood. They are also more likely to give blood regularly, enabling safe blood to be made available to all patients requiring transfusion. It is to these unsung heroes that World Blood Donor Day is dedicated.

We urge you to join with others in the global community in making World Blood Donor Day 2005 an event to remember.

October 2004

