



UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
Newark, New Jersey

*****PRESS RELEASE*****

DRAFT

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**RUTGERS, UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL LEAD WAY IN TREATING COVID-19
WITH CONVALESCENT PLASMA FROM RECOVERED PATIENTS**

*Researchers, doctors call for more blood donations from former patients
to help treat critically ill*

NEWARK, NJ – Rutgers physicians and University Hospital are leading the way in using blood plasma from patients who recovered from COVID-19 to treat new patients who are severely ill with COVID-19 infections. The clinicians and hospital are calling for more blood donations from those who have survived the deadly infection.

Although COVID-19 infections and fatalities continue to increase in New Jersey and across the United States, more than 50,000 people have recovered from the novel virus. Their blood plasma contains antibodies that may help critically ill patients fight, and perhaps conquer, the virus.

Last Friday, Rutgers practitioners at University Hospital received the first FDA approval for this treatment in New Jersey, and have thus far treated 17 patients with convalescent plasma. FDA approval is pending for the use of this treatment for additional patients.

The effectiveness of this treatment is not yet known, though similar treatment has been studied for Ebola and the MERS virus. Practitioners and researchers will monitor and investigate the progress of COVID-19 patients who receive this treatment.

“The use of convalescent plasma – blood plasma from individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 – presents real hope for saving lives,” **said Marc Klapholz, Chair of the Department of Medicine at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School and University Hospital,** and the Principal Investigator for the use of Convalescent COVID-19 plasma.

“In our battle against the COVID-19 virus, we are excited to be trialing this potential life-saving therapy in partnership with Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. This treatment plan has been used for more than 100 years to address disease outbreaks for other conditions, and we’re

optimistic that it will save lives,” said Shereef Elnahal, President and CEO of University Hospital.

People interested in donating plasma must have had a confirmed positive test for COVID-19 from a lab or health facility and be eligible to donate blood. They can reach the Rutgers and University Hospital COVID-19 Treatment Group at **973-972-5474** or via email at covidplasma@uhnj.org.

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About University Hospital

University Hospital is part of one of the nation’s leading academic medical centers and is the Level 1 Trauma Center for Northern New Jersey. Located at University Heights in Newark, University Hospital is a principal teaching hospital of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and a regional resource for advanced services across many medical specialties. For more information about University Hospital, please visit www.uhnj.org.