

For Release 6 a.m. PDT  
May 26, 2020

## **Racing Against Time, Medical Researchers, Life Science Companies and COVID-19 Survivors Launch National Campaign to Drive Blood Plasma Donation**

*“The Fight Is In Us” Campaign Seeks to Mobilize COVID-19 Survivors to Accelerate the Development of Potentially Lifesaving Therapies*

**[REDMOND, Wash., USA, and NEW YORK] — May 26, 2020** — A coalition of world-leading medical and research institutions, blood centers, life science companies, technology companies, philanthropic organizations, and COVID-19 survivor groups has come together to support the rapid development of potential new therapies for patients with COVID-19. Working together under the “[The Fight Is In Us](#)” campaign, the coalition is seeking to mobilize tens of thousands of people in the United States who have recovered from COVID-19 to donate their blood plasma, which contains vital antibodies that have fought off the disease and could now help others do the same.

The campaign is working against two urgent timelines: to recruit COVID-19 survivors within two months of their recovery to ensure that their blood plasma contains a robust enough concentration of antibodies to have a positive effect, and to address the substantial seasonal increase in COVID-19 cases anticipated this fall in the Northern Hemisphere by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other public health experts.

“As an early survivor of COVID-19, I was desperate to do whatever was in my power to be a part of the solution. I started [Survivor Corps](#) to mobilize and connect the thousands of people affected by COVID-19 to support all ongoing scientific, medical and academic research, and this coalition is furthering our goal,” said Diana Berrent, founder of Survivor Corps. “Inside COVID-19 survivors is the antibody-rich blood plasma that may help stem the tide of this pandemic. The time is now for superhero volunteers to donate their blood plasma and help stop COVID-19 in its tracks.”

Individuals who have recovered from COVID-19, or know someone who has, can visit [TheFightIsInUs.org](#) to understand if they may be eligible to donate and find a nearby blood or plasma donor center using a simple self-screening tool. Donating blood plasma is a generally

safe and proven process. The coalition offers more than 1,500 locations at which COVID-19 survivors can choose to donate. Donations can be made at both blood and plasma donor centers.

The coalition partners are working on two distinct approaches for treating COVID-19 that both urgently require collection of convalescent plasma now. One approach is the direct transfusion of blood plasma through the Expanded Access Program for convalescent plasma, which is currently being administered with authorization from the Food & Drug Administration by Mayo Clinic. Its safety and efficacy are currently being evaluated through multiple clinical trials in different populations. Blood donor centers throughout the country are currently collecting convalescent plasma from COVID-19 survivors for this purpose. The other approach is the development of a medicine known as a hyperimmune globulin (H-Ig), which is being manufactured now and will be studied in clinical trials this summer. Through the manufacturing process, the plasma is pooled, concentrated and purified, resulting in a vial of medicine with consistent levels of antibodies that is easy to store, distribute and administer to patients. Coalition members developing an H-Ig include CoVig-19 Plasma Alliance (CSL Behring, Takeda, ADMA Biologics, Biopharma Plasma, Biotest, BPL, GC Pharma, Octapharma and Sanquin) and Grifols.

### **About The Fight Is In Us**

The Fight Is In Us will help advance global research and understanding of COVID-19; progress toward effective, sustainable and widely available convalescent plasma-based therapies; and the medically sound allocation and use of convalescent plasma. The organizations and coalitions involved include leading academic medical institutions (the National COVID-19 Convalescent Plasma Expanded Access Program led by Mayo Clinic, Michigan State University and Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis); leading plasma companies (Grifols and the CoVig-19 Plasma Alliance, which includes founding members CSL Behring, Takeda, ADMA Biologics, Biopharma Plasma, Biotest, BPL, GC Pharma, Octapharma and Sanquin); leading blood centers (including the AABB, America's Blood Centers, Blood Centers of America, New York Blood Centers and Vitalant); healthcare organizations (Anthem and Ashfield Healthcare); COVID-19 survivor groups including Survivor Corps; and media including Ad Council.

The Fight Is In Us is also supported by advisory and technology members. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Lasker Foundation are providing advisory support. Microsoft Corp. is providing technology support for the development of TheFightIsInUs.org and a simple self-screening tool for potential donors. MITRE, a not-for-profit organization that operates federally funded research and development centers, is hosting both the website and tool. Uber Health has contributed 25,000 free, roundtrip Uber rides to and from plasma donor centers for those potentially eligible to donate.

The combined efforts of these organizations will contribute specialist advisory expertise, technical guidance and additional support to potentially save more lives — together. But the coalition's success depends on the urgent support of survivor donors around the world. Those

who have recovered from COVID-19 can learn more about how to donate their strength and about the coalition partners at [TheFightIsInUs.org](https://TheFightIsInUs.org).

**For Media Inquiries:**

Microsoft Media Relations  
WE Communications for Microsoft  
(425) 638-7777  
[rrt@we-worldwide.com](mailto:rrt@we-worldwide.com)

**About AABB**

AABB is an international, not-for-profit association representing individuals and institutions involved in the fields of transfusion medicine and biotherapies. The Association is committed to improving health through the development and delivery of standards, accreditation and educational programs that focus on optimizing patient and donor care and safety. AABB membership includes physicians, nurses, scientists, researchers, administrators, medical technologists and other health care providers. AABB members are located in more than 80 countries and AABB accredits institutions in more than 50 countries. For more information, visit: [www.aabb.org](http://www.aabb.org).

**About Bio Products Laboratory (BPL)**

Recognising the power of plasma and with over 60 years heritage in the industry, BPL supplies high-quality plasma derived medicines to meet the needs of clinicians, patients and customers globally. Headquartered in the United Kingdom and with plasma collection centres across the United States, we are dedicated to producing medicines for the treatment of immune deficiencies, bleeding disorders and infectious diseases as well for critical care. BPL invests in the latest R&D, technology and manufacturing methods, and continuously adapts to ensure that we continue to serve all our stakeholders effectively. For more information visit <http://www.bplgroup.com>.

**About the CoVIg-19 Plasma Alliance**

In an effort to help fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, a new alliance was created in April 2020 to help develop a potential plasma-derived therapy for people at risk for serious complications from COVID-19.

The CoVIg-19 Plasma Alliance brings together world-leading plasma companies to work on the development of an investigational unbranded polyclonal anti-SARS-CoV-2 hyperimmune globulin medicine with the potential to treat patients who are at risk for serious complications from COVID-19.

The “I” and “g” in CoVIg-19 stand for immune globulin, which the CoVIg-19 Plasma Alliance will use to concentrate the antibodies into a potential medicine.

The Alliance, formed by CSL Behring and Takeda, also includes the leading-edge expertise of Biotest, BPL, LFB, and Octapharma. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is providing

advisory support. Microsoft is providing technology including the Alliance website and the Plasma Bot for donor recruitment. Experts from the Alliance are collaborating across key aspects such as plasma collection, clinical trial development, and product manufacturing.

### **About CSL Behring**

CSL Behring is a global biotherapeutics leader driven by its promise to save lives. Focused on serving patients' needs by using the latest technologies, we develop and deliver innovative therapies that are used to treat coagulation disorders, primary immune deficiencies, hereditary angioedema, inherited respiratory disease, and neurological disorders. The company's products are also used in cardiac surgery, burn treatment and to prevent hemolytic disease of the newborn. CSL Behring operates one of the world's largest plasma collection networks, CSL Plasma. The parent company, [CSL Limited](#) (ASX:CSL;USOTC:CSLLY), headquartered in Melbourne, Australia, employs more than 26,000 people, and delivers its life-saving therapies to people in more than 70 countries. For more information, visit [www.cslbehring.com](http://www.cslbehring.com) and for inspiring stories about the promise of biotechnology, visit Vita [www.cslbehring.com/Vita](http://www.cslbehring.com/Vita).

### **About Grifols**

Grifols is a global healthcare company founded in Barcelona in 1909 committed to improving the health and well-being of people around the world. Its four divisions – Bioscience, Diagnostic, Hospital and Bio Supplies – develop, produce and market innovative solutions and services that are sold in more than 100 countries.

Pioneers in the plasma industry, Grifols operates a growing network of donation centers worldwide. It transforms collected plasma into essential medicines to treat chronic, rare and, at times, life-threatening conditions. As a recognized leader in transfusion medicine, Grifols also offers a comprehensive portfolio of solutions designed to enhance safety from donation to transfusion. In addition, the company supplies tools, information and services that enable hospitals, pharmacies and healthcare professionals to efficiently deliver expert medical care.

Grifols, with more than 24,000 employees in 30 countries and regions, is committed to a sustainable business model that sets the standard for continuous innovation, quality, safety and ethical leadership.

The company's class A shares are listed on the Spanish Stock Exchange, where they are part of the Ibex-35 (MCE:GRF). Grifols non-voting class B shares are listed on the Mercado Continuo (MCE:GRF.P) and on the U.S. NASDAQ through ADRs (NASDAQ:GRFS).

For more information, please visit [www.grifols.com](http://www.grifols.com).

### **About Mayo Clinic**

[Mayo Clinic](#) is a nonprofit organization committed to innovation in clinical practice, education and research, and providing compassion, expertise and answers to everyone who needs healing. [Visit the Mayo Clinic News Network](#) for additional Mayo Clinic news and [An Inside Look at Mayo Clinic](#) for more information about Mayo.

### **About Octapharma**

Headquartered in Lachen, Switzerland, Octapharma is one of the largest human protein manufacturers in the world, developing and producing human proteins from human plasma and human cell lines. Octapharma employs more than 10,000 people worldwide to support the treatment of patients in 118 countries with products across three therapeutic areas: Hematology; Immunotherapy and Critical care. Octapharma has seven R&D sites and six state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities in Austria, France, Germany, Mexico and Sweden, with a combined capacity of approximately 8 mil litres of plasma per annum. In addition, Octapharma operates more than 140 plasma donation centres across Europe and the US. For more information, visit [www.octapharma.com](http://www.octapharma.com).

### **About Survivor Corps**

Survivor Corps is the largest grassroots movement in America dedicated to actively ending this pandemic. We are mobilizing all those affected by COVID-19 to support all ongoing scientific, medical and academic research to find a vaccine and a cure. We hope to get people back into their communities and back to work, all while fostering the spirit of unity and solidarity that is urgently needed during this time of crisis.

With every passing day, thousands of people across the country are being infected with COVID-19. The vast majority will survive and most will likely develop antibodies to the virus. The mysteries to this virus will be solved, in part, by individual donations to scientific research.

Survivor Corps is the epicenter of HOPE. For more information, visit [www.survivorcorps.com](http://www.survivorcorps.com).

### **About Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited**

Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited (TSE:4502/NYSE:TAK) is a global, values-based, R&D-driven biopharmaceutical leader headquartered in Japan, committed to bringing Better Health and a Brighter Future to patients by translating science into highly-innovative medicines. Takeda focuses its R&D efforts on four therapeutic areas: Oncology, Rare Diseases, Neuroscience, and Gastroenterology (GI). We also make targeted R&D investments in Plasma-Derived Therapies and Vaccines. We are focusing on developing highly innovative medicines that contribute to making a difference in people's lives by advancing the frontier of new treatment options and leveraging our enhanced collaborative R&D engine and capabilities to create a robust, modality-diverse pipeline. Our employees are committed to improving quality of life for patients and to working with our partners in health care in approximately 80 countries. For more information, visit <https://www.takeda.com>.

### **About Microsoft**

Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT" @microsoft) enables digital transformation for the era of an intelligent cloud and an intelligent edge. Its mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more.

###

**Additional Quote Sheet will also be included in press package**

## **AABB**

“AABB is proud to support blood centers throughout the country that are collecting potentially lifesaving plasma from COVID-19 survivors. The blood banking community is an integral part of our health care system, and their heroism has truly been on display during this pandemic. Convalescent plasma can be a game-changing therapy for patients in need, and we are pleased to be part of a coalition that recognizes and supports the vital work blood centers do.” — Debra BenAvram, CEO of the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB)

## **Ad Council**

“We are proud to join this critical campaign to educate and empower COVID-19 survivors to donate plasma to help save the lives of others. During this time of uncertainty, we know that this will be a powerful tool in the fight against COVID-19.” — Lisa Sherman, President and CEO of the Ad Council

## **America’s Blood Centers**

“Community blood centers continue to be at the forefront of the nation’s efforts to collect convalescent plasma from individuals who have recovered from COVID-19. ABC member blood centers remain committed to ensuring the availability of convalescent plasma as a potential treatment for COVID-19 patients and are pleased to have the support of Microsoft and other partner organizations in expanding the collection of convalescent plasma throughout the U.S. Community blood centers will remain mobilized in assisting the nation’s COVID-19 response efforts.”— Kate Fry, Chief Executive Officer, America’s Blood Centers

## **Anthem**

“At Anthem, we recognize the importance of building a convalescent plasma biobank in the fight against COVID-19, and are proud to support the efforts to help COVID-19 survivors, patients and their caregivers. Joining the coalition and The Fight Is In Us campaign expands on our partnership and leadership in collaborative efforts with community and healthcare organizations to lead through care, guide the recovery and help shape public-private solutions for the future of healthcare.” — Steve Friedhoff, Chief Clinical Officer, Anthem

## **Ashfield Healthcare**

“Ashfield Healthcare is extremely proud to be part of this collaborative partnership in the fight against COVID-19. Patients are at the core of the healthcare services that we provide, and we’re passionate about leveraging our industry-leading contact center service to support COVID-19 survivors. We are committed to supporting the survivors who will be participating in this critical campaign to donate their plasma.” — Greg Flynn, Global President, Ashfield Healthcare

## **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

“Safe and effective treatments for COVID-19 are urgently needed, and convalescent plasma and hyperimmune globulin could play a key role in saving lives and protecting frontline responders from infection until vaccines are widely available. We’re excited that major academic research

institutions and life science companies have joined forces to accelerate the development of potentially lifesaving products, and we're incredibly grateful to COVID-19 survivors for their essential commitment to this fight." — Trevor Mundel, President of Global Health, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

### **CoVIg-19 Plasma Alliance**

"Partnership and collaboration are critical to the success of all the coalition development programs that rely on convalescent plasma donation. The more plasma we can collect, and the earlier we can collect it, will directly impact the speed and scale of our efforts. The growing and active involvement of leading public and private companies from outside the plasma industry, who support the drive for plasma donation, underscores the potential of convalescent plasma to fight this public health crisis. Together, we all share the same goal — to save lives by using the power of this scarce resource in different ways." — Julie Kim, President of Plasma-Derived Therapies Business Unit, Takeda, and Co-Leader, CoVIg-19 Plasma Alliance

"During times of uncertainty, leaders must lead. The hyperimmune globulin therapy has the potential to be one of the earliest treatment options for COVID-19 and also can be scaled and distributed. We look forward to working with NIAID and health authorities to bring this therapy to patients as early as possible. One of the stated goals of the alliance is to be an effective partner for important institutions such as NIAID and also to help develop coherent regulatory strategies that can give global health authorities the confidence to streamline the approval process of hyperimmune globulin therapy for COVID-19." — Bill Mezzanotte, Executive Vice President, Head of R&D, CSL Behring, and Co-Leader, CoVIg-19 Plasma Alliance

### **Grifols**

"The development of a hyperimmune globulin for treatment as well as pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis is not just a rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to its attributes as a readily available therapy, it can bridge the time necessary to develop a vaccine. The technology also forms the basis for rapid deployment of a therapy in response to future outbreaks of emerging viruses and other pathogens. The Fight Is In Us provides the opportunity to harness biology's natural solution to fighting disease." — David Bell, Chief Innovation Officer, Grifols

### **Mayo Clinic**

"It's important to know that convalescent plasma is a biological product that has to be obtained from a specific set of patients who have recovered from COVID-19. It cannot be made in a lab. There's no other source. That's why reaching as many of these volunteers as possible is so essential." — Michael Joyner, M.D., Anesthesiologist, Mayo Clinic, and Principal Investigator, Expanded Access Program (EAP) for convalescent plasma to fight COVID-19

"Mayo Clinic's researchers are working around the clock to accelerate discoveries related to NB SARS-CoV2, the virus, and COVID-19, the disease. Successful outcomes have never been more urgently needed, and we continue to depend on the collaborative efforts of many across the

nation and the globe to rapidly discover, translate and apply scientific advances.” — Gregory Gores, M.D., Kinney Executive Dean for Research, Mayo Clinic

**Microsoft**

“Microsoft has provided the technology infrastructure for a health bot that guides people through their eligibility as a plasma donor and directs them to the nearest donor center. Basically, we’re asking people who have survived COVID-19 to contribute to helping others do the same.” — Peter Lee, Corporate Vice President, AI and Research, Microsoft

**The MITRE Corporation**

“We are privileged to serve as a trusted partner to host the website to spread the critical message on how recovered patients can help others in need. Building an army of donors to rapidly develop effective plasma-based treatments is an exemplar of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.” — Rich Byrne, Senior Vice President, The MITRE Corporation

**Uber Health**

“There is a long road ahead in the fight against COVID-19, and we must continue to support those on the front lines and those working towards a potential treatment. We at Uber are committed to helping move what matters, and Uber Health is proud to donate rides to the Plasma Collection Coalition, eliminating transportation as a barrier to plasma donation for those who are eligible, and willing, to participate.” — Dan Trigub, Head of Uber Health

###