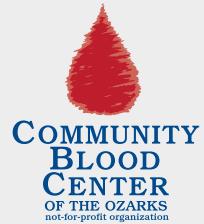




# universal donor **DIGEST**



Celebrating the lifesaving potential of type O negative blood donors

November 2015

## Transfusions help to save unborn baby's life

"They told me that if he didn't get the transfusion, he could be dead within a couple of days." Kiley Fonner was rushed via emergency ambulance from Springfield to Truman Medical Center in Kansas City. "He was almost 6 months when we found out. I loved him so much already."

She and her baby would undergo intrauterine blood transfusions five times. Each transfusion delivered O Negative blood – the universal blood type – through Kiley's abdomen and into the umbilical cord. "It hurt worse than giving birth to him," she said.

A few hours after the first intrauterine blood transfusion, the physician shared news with Kiley and her boyfriend, Kevin Lillard. "Your baby just went from a 4% chance of survival to an 81% chance of survival."

Sterling was born five weeks early, on August 13, 2014, but he wasn't out of the woods yet.

Kiley's blood type is Rh Negative. Kevin's blood type is Rh Positive. Known as Rh incompatibility, this put their baby at risk of developing Rh disease, a potentially dangerous form of anemia. If an RH Positive baby's red blood cells cross over to an Rh Negative mother, her immune system identifies the baby's blood cells as foreign cells. Her immune system develops antibodies to destroy these foreign cells, causing severe anemia in Sterling.

Following his birth, the baby required three more transfusions. These took place at Cox South with blood provided by CBCO donors.

On October 8, 2015, they learned their son no longer needed transfusions.

Sterling is doing well now. "Boy, this kid is active," Kiley said. "You can't even tell there was anything wrong with him. He's one of the happiest babies ever. He's in the 96th percentile right now. He's doing so great."

"I can't explain how appreciative I am of people who take the time to donate," she said.

Before Sterling's health crisis, she had never given any thought to where the blood came from if patients needed transfusions. Now, Kiley says she owes those donors everything.

"They saved my baby's life. If it wasn't for them, I don't know if I would be sitting here with my son right now. I can't thank them enough," Kiley said. "I would hug them and not let go. I feel like they're family now. Their blood is in my baby's blood. I'm really, really thankful for them."

As an O-Negative blood donor – the universal blood type – health care professionals rely on you to help their patients. You are one of the people that Kiley can't thank enough. Won't you make an appointment to donate today? All five donor centers are listed here: <http://www.cbco.org/donate-blood>

### Save the Date! - October 7, 2016

We would like to thank U-Donors who donate 4 or more times during our fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) by inviting you to a new event. Dinner is on us Friday, October 7, 2016. More details to come! Meanwhile, to schedule your next donation, log in to CBCO's donor portal by clicking [HERE](#).



Photo courtesy of Kiley Fonner.

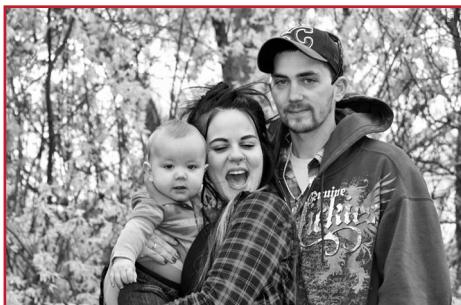


Photo courtesy of Kiley Fonner.

# Minutes of your time could save someone's entire life

When Samantha Garza became a blood donor in 2010, while attending college out of state, she learned that her O Negative blood was the universal blood type, with the ability to help anyone with any blood type.

"I had this feeling that, even though I would probably never meet the people I was helping save with my blood, I knew I was making a difference in someone's life," she said. "That was all that mattered. Ever since then, I decided to donate as many times as possible."

A move to Missouri led Samantha to donating with CBCO through her employer at the time, the national office of the Assemblies of God. "Every few months, they would host a blood drive, and I'd be sure to sign up."

Being a universal donor is a big responsibility, since O Negative blood is always in demand for emergencies, trauma patients, other O Negative patients, and – thanks to our O Negative blood donors who are also Baby Quad donors – infants who are in need.

Samantha meets that responsibility by being consistent with her donations, rather than donating once each year. She has now been a part of 10 blood drives with CBCO, most recently in October with her current employer, Evangel University.

Her role in saving lives means a lot to Samantha. "There really are no words to express how thankful I am, that through such a small act as donating blood, I could potentially save hundreds of lives," she said. "That reason alone will always be enough for me to continue donating, as often as possible."

Samantha also appreciates her fellow universal donors. "I'm glad to know that there are others out there who donate, so that when I would happen to need some, there would be some for me."

For fellow donors, and for those who have not yet tried giving blood, Samantha has a message.

"Donate!" she said with a smile. "How can someone not want to spend a few minutes of their time, to save someone's entire life? I say it's totally worth it. I encourage you today, to think of those who may someday need blood. Don't be selfish. Share!"

In October, Samantha redeemed her LifePoints rewards for the first time, choosing a \$25 Visa gift card. "I find the program pretty awesome! Although, I must say, that I would definitely still donate even if there were no such program," she said. "It's just nice to be treated every now and then."

What keeps Samantha excited about rolling up her sleeve to donate?

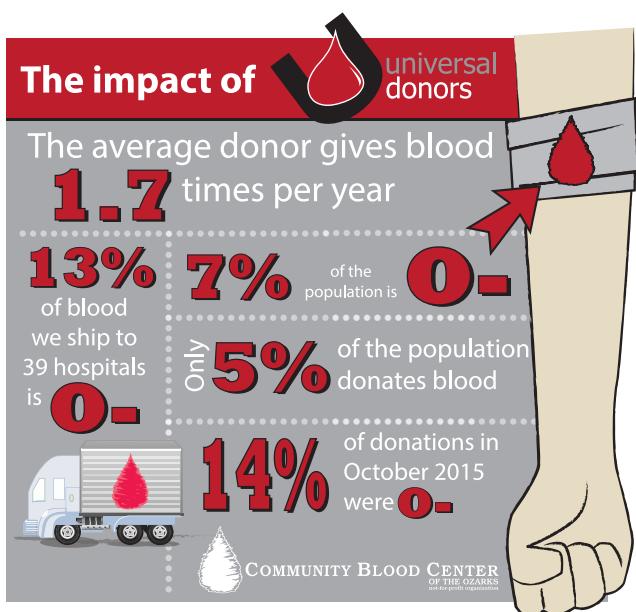
"I may not be a doctor or know what to do in an emergency, but knowing that my blood is available to assist the doctors in doing what is needed to keep someone alive -- that makes me happy!"

Wondering if you have enough LifePoints to redeem yet? Check your balance by logging in to CBCO's donor portal [HERE](#). You'll see how many points you have and your options for redemption.

Are you a universal donor? We would love to hear about your reason for donating blood. Click [HERE](#) to tell us in the comments on Facebook.



Samantha Garza



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