

FEAR OF AIDS HAS RED CROSS DISCOURAGING CERTAIN DONORS

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Body

The American **Red Cross** says it will inform homosexual males, Haitian immigrants, drug users and others considered at high risk of carrying a dangerous disease, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, that they should not donate blood.

The organization acted in response to Public Health Service recommendations announced Friday by Edward Brandt, assistant secretary of Health and Human Services.

WASHINGTON, March 6 (UPI) -The American **Red Cross** says it will inform homosexual males, Haitian immigrants, drug users and others considered at high risk of carrying a dangerous disease, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, that they should not donate blood.

"The American **Red Cross** said that all of its blood centers will be providing potential **donors** with information on acquired immune deficiency syndrome," the group announced. "It will also inform high-risk groups that they should refrain from making donations until more is known about **AIDS**."

The disease, which diminishes the body's natural immunity defenses, leaves victims susceptible to rare forms of cancers, respiratory and other diseases.

Fatality Rate Over 40 Percent

The present fatality rate is above 40 percent and scientists **fear** it will go higher, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Of the more than 1,000 cases reported, not one of the victims has recovered from the illness.

Although there is no conclusive scientific evidence that the infectious agent is transmitted by blood, health officials say 15 cases may be linked to the blood transfusions and several hemophiliacs have died after receiving transfusions.

The Public Health Service said "high risk" **donors** included patients diagnosed with **AIDS**, sexual partners of **AIDS** patients, persons with **AIDS** symptoms, sexually active homosexual or bisexual men with multiple partners, Haitian entrants to the United States, current or past abusers of intravenous drugs, and sexual partners of individuals at high risk for **AIDS**.

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