



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contacts:

Claudine Van Gonka/Manager, Public Relations
C: 619-455-7785
cvangonka@sandiegobloodbank.org

Michele Corbett/VP, Marketing
C: 619-807-4620
mcorbett@sandiegobloodbank.org

MOM DONATES CONVALESCENT PLASMA AS 19-YEAR OLD DAUGHTER RECOVERS FROM COVID-19

SAN DIEGO (May 13, 2020) – Chula Vista resident and recovered COVID-19 patient Marielena Barajas recently donated convalescent plasma as her 19-year old daughter was fighting for her life in the ICU.



Barajas passed the virus to her daughter, husband and mother-in-law who were all sheltering in place together. While Marielena and her family's symptoms were bad, her daughter Maya's symptoms were critical.

Maya was admitted to the ICU at Sharp Memorial Hospital in early April and had to be placed on a ventilator. Maya's doctor and Marielena made a plan to have Marielena donate convalescent plasma for Maya. But it would take a few days to get through the donation and testing process. Fortunately, San Diego Blood Bank already had an available unit on hand, and it was transfused to her daughter that evening. Marielena went on to pay it forward by donating convalescent plasma to support someone else in need.

According to John Stephan, Sharp HealthCare Senior Blood Bank Specialist, "The patient's condition, going down very fast, quickly stabilized after the CCP transfusion. The patient's provider was very grateful that there was another treatment therapy as he had no other options for his patient."

While COVID-19 has no proven treatment, plasma taken from those who have recovered may help patients currently fighting the virus.

"Maya spent 20 days on a ventilator in the ICU. On the 14th day she received a convalescent plasma transfusion and was successfully extubated that following Friday. Maya is still in the hospital and she is now making steady progress." said Barajas. "We can thank God, everyone who prayed, all of the doctors and medical staff as well as the San Diego Blood Bank and donors."

Individuals can donate convalescent plasma if they have a confirmed positive laboratory test and no symptoms for the last 28 days. People with a subsequent confirmed negative test can donate after 14 days of symptom resolution. **People are encouraged to fill out the form even if they have not yet been tested.**

To submit contact information to be qualified as a convalescent plasma donor, visit www.sandiegobloodbank.org/donateplasma. Donors will also need to meet routine donor screening criteria.

Marielena is available for video/phone interviews. Maya is available for phone interviews.

About San Diego Blood Bank

SDBB is dedicated to community health by providing a reliable supply of blood to patients in need. Our vision is to further ensure the health of our community by simultaneously delivering related health and wellness education and services and extending into research. SDBB is an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit that serves hospitals in San Diego, Orange, Imperial and Los Angeles counties with blood transfusion products and reference laboratory services. SDBB currently operates six local donor centers and 10 bloodmobiles. SDBB's Cell Therapy Program provides lifesaving stem cell transplants to patients worldwide. For more information about SDBB, visit www.SanDiegoBloodBank.org or connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

###