

Cord Blood Banking: American Society of Blood & Marrow Transplantation

SHOULD YOU STORE YOUR BABY'S UMBILICAL CORD BLOOD? SOME FACTS TO HELP GUIDE YOUR DECISION

Why Collect Umbilical Cord Blood?

In recent years, doctors have successfully treated patients with life-threatening diseases, such as leukemia, by transplanting them with blood collected from the umbilical cord of a healthy baby. This new treatment, called cord blood transplantation, has prompted many expectant parents to consider storing their newborn's umbilical cord blood for possible future use.

Can I Collect and Store Cord Blood for My Own Baby in Case It's Needed?

Yes, but the chance of using one's own cord blood is very low—currently less than 4/100th of 1%. Many patients who need a cord blood transplant need cells from a donor, not their own blood cells, to cure their disease. Their own cord blood may carry the same cells that caused their disease. Frequently, brothers and sisters are the best match as donors. Otherwise, public registries such as the National Marrow Donor Program can find unrelated cord blood or adult volunteer donors for many people who need a transplant.

Can My Baby's Cord Blood Help a Family Member or Friend?

If the baby has a brother or sister with a disease that can be treated by a cord blood transplant, banking the baby's cord blood can make sense, and may be recommended by your doctor. For such families, the Children's Hospital Oakland Sibling Donor Cord Blood Program (CHORI) specializes in banking cord blood at no charge. Several public cord blood banks also bank cord blood for families who have an identified need for the cells.

Collecting and keeping a baby's cord blood may be recommended if the baby's parent has a disease that can be treated by transplant, both parents share genetic markers called HLA antigens, and if a better donor is not available. Banking cord blood for family members other than the baby's siblings or biologic parents is not advised without the doctor's guidance, because it is unlikely that the cord blood unit will be useful.

Can I Donate My Baby's Cord Blood to Someone Who Needs It?

Donating your baby's cord blood to a public bank is encouraged whenever possible. A list of banks that accept donations of cord blood can be found on the National Marrow Donor Program Web site at www.marrow.org under *Donor Information* or phone 800-627-7692. Not all hospitals collect cord blood, and not all cord blood units can be accepted for storage because of the health history of the parents, the volume of the cord blood collected, or other considerations.

Is the Procedure Used to Collect Cord Blood Safe for My Baby?

Yes. The cord blood is collected after the baby has been delivered and poses no risk to the newborn child or mother. However, there may be some situations when it is not advisable to collect cord blood, such as if you are having twins or your baby is premature. Please check with your doctor before making a decision.

What Does It Cost to Donate or Store Cord Blood?

There is no cost to parents for donating cord blood. Private storage for personal use usually requires an initial fee plus an annual maintenance fee.

Where Can I Get More Information?

You can get more information from the following resources:

- National Marrow Donor Program at 1-800-627-7692 or www.marrow.org
- Blood and Marrow Transplant Information Network at 1-888-597-7654 or www.bmtinfonet.org
- A Parents Guide to Cord Blood Banks <http://parentsguidecordblood.org>

What can I do with My Baby's Umbilical Cord Blood?

1. Donate it to someone who needs a transplant ...
 - ✓ Recommended by American Society of Blood & Marrow Transplantation, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.
 - ✓ Call National Marrow Donor Program at 800-627-7692 or visit www.marrow.org/DONOR/index.html for a list of cord blood banks accepting donations
2. Store it for private use because the baby's parent or sibling has a disease that can be treated by a cord blood transplant ...
 - ✓ Recommended by American Society of Blood & Marrow Transplantation, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.
 - ✓ Call Children's Hospital Oakland Sibling Donor Cord Blood Program (CHORI) at 510-450-7600 or the National Marrow Donor Program (see above) for more information
3. Store it for private use in the future, in case a need arises ...
 - ✓ NOT recommended by American Society of Blood & Marrow Transplantation, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.
 - ✓ Contact a private cord blood bank. A list of private banks can be found online at <http://parentsguidecordblood.org>