



Invest in Life!

How can my baby's cord blood help someone else?

Cord blood is the term used for the blood collected from the umbilical cord and placenta (after birth) when a healthy baby is born. Cord blood is rich in blood-forming cells that can be used in transplants for patients with leukemia, lymphoma and many other life-threatening diseases. It can be especially useful for transplant patients from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, who often have difficulty finding an adult transplant match.

Options for Cord Blood Banking

You have 3 options for the use of your child's cord blood:

Public Cord Blood Banking – You can offer the gift of life to others by choosing to donate your baby's cord blood for public use. The cord blood will be stored in a public bank so that it can be transplanted into **any** patient considered a match: not only here in Arkansas but throughout the world. There is no cost to you because public cord blood banks cover the cost of processing, testing and storing donated cord blood.

Private Cord Blood Banking – Private banking allows you to store the cord blood for your own family. You are charged a fee for the initial collection plus an annual storage fee. Please contact the CBBA Coordinator toll free at 1-855-854-2222 or 501-686-6271 for current rates and fees. (As of 6/01/2011, \$1399.00 covers the initial collection and 1 year of storage, the storage rate is \$120.00/yr after that. Rates are subject to change).

Research Cord Blood Banking – By choosing this option you are allowing us to use your cord blood to be used to further research studies. Researchers conduct studies to help improve the transplant process for future patients, and to discover new ways to use the cells to help repair damaged organs.

TO GET STARTED: Please contact the CBBA Coordinator at 1-855-854-2222 (CBBA) or 501-686-6271 between 8:00 – 3:30 Monday through Friday to arrange for cord blood banking, or see our website: www.cordbloodbankarkansas.org for more information. You can sign up at anytime during your pregnancy but we encourage you to enroll by the 34th week to ensure you receive a cord blood collection kit before you deliver.

Frequently asked questions:

When should I sign up? If you are interested in cord blood banking with us you should contact the CBBA by your 34th week of pregnancy. We can enroll donors later than that but it increases the chances that you could deliver before receiving your cord blood collection kit.

How does donated cord blood help others? It can help treat diseases such as cancer (leukemia or lymphoma), other malignancies, bone marrow failure, hemoglobinopathies, immunodeficiencies, and/or inborn errors of metabolism.

Why are more donations needed? Seven out of 10 people will not have a suitable matched donor in their family and will depend on a registry to find a suitable donor. An example would be the *Be The Match Registry*, a registry operated by the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP), to find a match. Adding more cord blood units to the registry increases the likelihood that all patients will find a match. *Racially and ethnically diverse donors are especially needed.* Patients are more likely to match tissue types with someone who shares their racial or ethnic heritage. And since nearly 35 percent of cord blood units used in NMDP transplants go to ethnically or racially diverse patients, we strongly encourage donations from all racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Will having my child's cord blood collected affect the health of my newborn? No, the cord blood collection occurs after the normal birth of your child when the umbilical cord has been clamped/cut and when you are spending time with your newborn.

Will the collection of my baby's cord blood change my delivery experience? No, the cord blood collection will not affect your labor or delivery in any way. It occurs after the birth of your healthy baby and only blood from the umbilical cord and placenta is taken.

If I donate, is any of my information ever given to the patient or family that receives my cord blood? No. No identifying information of you or your baby is ever exchanged between a cord blood donor and the cord blood transplant recipient or their family.

I would like to donate but, am concerned I might not qualify. What would disqualify me as a donor? The donor evaluation is much like when you are screened for a blood donation. The donor information form has a series of questions that helps us screen you as a donor and takes just a few minutes to complete. Some things that would disqualify you from donating would be:

- You are under 18 years of age
- You are undergoing treatment for a serious active infection and/or are on antibiotics.
- You have a chronic disease such as HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis.
- You are an IV or illicit drug user.
- You and the baby's father have a very strong history of cancer

Would my donated cord blood be used for human cloning? No. We offer Physician Scientists cord blood for research but the unit would not be used for cloning.

Is donated cord blood always stored? No, not all donated cord blood is eligible to be banked. The collected cord blood unit must be large enough, have a high enough cell count and be free from infection or diseases. This ensures the cord blood unit is suitable for a patient needing a transplant.