

## **Umbilical Cord Blood Banking**

**What is it?** Umbilical cord blood banking is a process by which blood is taken from the umbilical cord of the baby at birth to be preserved for possible future use. Cord blood cells are “stem cells”, which can be used for a broad range of potentially life saving transplant procedures.

**Why would one do it?** Cord blood can be used to treat a variety of diseases including certain types of cancer and other genetic disorders as well as immune system diseases in children and adults. Your baby’s cord blood could be used if he/she developed one of these serious diseases and could be considered if a sibling or parent became ill.

**What are the issues?** The decision to bank your baby’s cord blood can be a difficult one as there are many factors to consider. The procedure itself is very safe. However, the diseases for which it is used are relatively rare, and there are many unanswered questions regarding the efficacy and duration of long term cord blood preservation and utilization. It is estimated that 1 in 20,000 privately stored cord blood samples is actually used.

**What are the costs?** There are private and public facilities that specialize in cord blood banking. Public banks collect cord blood at no charge to the person making the donation, but there are charges to the person receiving the donation. These public banks do not guarantee that the donation you provide will be available should your family require services, as the donation made is available for general public use. Private banks guarantee the blood you donate is reserved for use by your family alone. However, there are substantial fees associated with registration and long term preservation of the blood. The cost of private cord blood banking can range from approximately \$2000.00 to \$3000.00 dollars for the initial collection and 10 years of storage.

If you are considering this procedure, we recommend that you discuss it with your health care provider. Listed below are some resources as well as private and public facilities that specialize in preservation of cord blood.

### **General information:**

Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada;  
[http://www.sogc.org/health/pregnancy-cord-blood\\_e.asp](http://www.sogc.org/health/pregnancy-cord-blood_e.asp)

### **Public Cord Blood Banks:**

Alberta Cord Blood Bank  
<http://www.acbb.ca> Tel:(780) 492-2673

### **Private Cord Blood Banks:**

Inception Cord Blood Program  
<http://www.inception.com> Tel: (416) 586-8818

Cord Blood Bank of Canada Inc  
<http://www.cordbloodbankofcanada.com> Tel: (905) 943-4933