

You wanted to know?

What is cord blood?

- The blood that remains in the umbilical cord and placenta after a baby's birth.
- A precious gift of life that used to be routinely discarded.
- It is a rich source of stem cells that can save someone with a life-threatening disease.
- Used to treat blood-related cancers, immune and genetic diseases.
- Can be donated to a public cord blood bank, to serve as a national resource.
- It can be collected, processed and cryogenically preserved for future potential life-saving cord blood transplants.



Can all collected cord blood units be stored?

- At the SCBB, it is important that the cord blood units (CBUs) stored meet the stringent international public cord blood banking requirements for life-saving transplants.
- Every cord blood unit will be evaluated for:-
 1. Total volume of blood,
 2. Total number of cells,
 3. Cell viability and
 4. Clots (if any).
- When the CBUs do not meet the banking requirements, it will be assigned for research.
- The CBU will be discarded if the mother has not granted approval for research.
- Every baby is unique, thus, each placenta and umbilical cord differs.
- The total number of cells collected from each umbilical cord varies and is unpredictable.



Upcoming Issues of Cord Connection

Look out for upcoming issues of Cord Connection which will be published quarterly. Cord Connection will feature, among others, events and activities organised by the SCBB, the latest news and developments in public cord blood banking, health information and tips. You will also come face-to-face with donors, patients and healthcare professionals who will share their story relating to cord blood donation.

If you would like Cord Connection to be delivered or emailed to you, please send a note to info@scbb.com.sg, stating your full name, mailing address, contact number and email.

For more information

To be part of this celebration, please visit www.scbb.com.sg.

Alternatively, you may call **6394 5011**, or email info@scbb.com.sg with your queries and feedback.

Your baby's umbilical cord blood can be collected at SCBB's partner obstetric hospitals.

Please remember to contact SCBB for an appointment to complete the Informed Consent and Medical History Questionnaire before admission into the hospital.



The Celebration of Life! A hope for tomorrow!



“SCBB is the only public cord blood bank in South-East Asia to facilitate 23 cord blood transplants, a remarkable achievement since the SCBB's official opening in September 2005!”

In February 2009, the Singapore Cord Blood Bank (SCBB) celebrated its 21st cord blood transplant, after doubling the number of cord blood transplants in 2008. This marks a significant milestone in SCBB's history.

Since the announcement, SCBB has facilitated cord blood transplants for two more patients, bringing the total to 23. Besides Singapore, the public bank's beneficiaries include patients from countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines, Netherlands, Greece, Italy and the United States amongst many other countries. This makes SCBB the only public cord blood bank in South-East Asia to facilitate 23 transplants, a remarkable achievement since the SCBB's official opening in September 2005!

The SCBB recognises the unique genetic composition and aims to build a national resource for Singaporeans of Chinese, Malay, Indian and Pan-Asian origins. It also provides patients of Asian lineage in the South-East Asia region and around the world, with a better chance of finding an adequate blood stem cell match.

As part of the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) network, SCBB's Cord Blood Units (CBUs) are also available to patients looking for a suitable stem cell unit not only in Singapore but also around the world. There are more than 6,000 men, women and children worldwide searching the NMDP Registry for a life-saving

stem cell unit. These patients have leukaemia, lymphoma and other life-threatening diseases that can be treated by a stem cell transplant. For many of these patients, a transplant may be the best and only hope of a cure.

Cord blood, a precious gift of life, used to be routinely discarded after the birth of a baby. Today, this gift - the blood from the umbilical cord, can be collected after the baby's birth and donated to a public cord blood bank to help someone with a life-threatening disease. Medical science now recognizes that cord blood is a rich source of stem cells, which can be collected, processed and cryogenically preserved for future potentially life-saving cord blood transplants.

According to Dr. William Hwang, Medical Director of SCBB and Senior Consultant, Dept. of Haematology, Singapore General Hospital, "At least six people are diagnosed daily in Singapore with different types of blood-related diseases. Many of these patients will require a blood stem cell transplant in order to survive. As most of the major cord blood banks are established in Europe and the United States, this means that patients with Asian ancestry have difficulty finding a match. The SCBB was established to provide that unmet need for our Asian community."

To be part of this celebration, please refer to page 4.



“It breaks my heart to see children lose their lives while waiting for a stem-cell transplant.”

Tay Ai Lian

SCBB Cord Blood Donor – 2006 & 2008



for a suitably matched stem cell unit for transplant. She shared, “I was taking care of them for a month and bonded with them and their family. I watched their condition deteriorate as they waited for a matching stem cell unit for the transplant.”

The pain of losing her patients was so deeply ingrained in her mind that she felt compelled to discuss the cord blood donation with her husband when her Obstetrician and Gynaecologist (ObGyn) passed her a SCBB Cord Blood Donation brochure. Their conclusion was it would be a waste to discard it and since then, Ms. Tay has donated her cord blood not just once but twice!

“I am glad to be able to do something more for the patients that I see everyday

by donating the cord blood and offering a source of hope to patients looking for a matching stem-cell transplant.” said Ai Lian.

By making a cord blood donation, we would be contributing to a common resource of similar ethnicity, increasing the chances for patients with a treatable condition to find a matching cord blood unit and receive a life-saving transplant. More individuals and families will have a future filled with hope.

Expectant mothers interested to be a cord blood donor should speak with their ObGyn (Delivering Physician) from 28 – 32 weeks of gestation. Alternatively, they may wish to contact the SCBB directly at 6394-5011 or info@scbb.com.sg after 32 weeks of gestation to complete the donation process.

As a registered nurse, Ms. Tay Ai Lian witnessed numerous young children under her care battle with various blood diseases. She watched helplessly as two young patients passed on while waiting

“On any given day, more than 6,000 men, women and children are searching for a life-saving stem cell unit around the world. These patients have leukaemia, lymphoma and other life-threatening diseases... For many of these patients, a transplant may be the best and only hope of a cure.”

National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP)



*The SCBB will not be able to take consent or collect cord blood from potential donors if the SCBB Informed Consent has not signed with our SCBB Coordinators before going into the hospital for delivery of their baby.

Events



Barclays Capital Outreach Talk

Barclays Capital invited the SCBB for a talk on “The Importance of Cord Blood Donation”, as part of the “New Parents Network”, a forum at the investment bank for parents to exchange parenting advice. It was heartening to see both soon-to-be mothers and fathers attending and contributing to the success of the talk.

In-house NUH Obstetric & Gynaecology Talk

The SCBB also held an in-house talk for the Obstetric & Gynaecology Department at the National University Hospital (NUH). This talk provided an update to the Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (ObGyn) on the SCBB cord blood donation collection numbers from NUH. The concerns that the doctors faced, their importance in the cord blood donation process and the need for cord blood donation were addressed during this talk.



Taha Mosque Outreach Talk

An Outreach Talk on “The Importance of Cord Blood Donation” was conducted in a combination of Malay and English at Taha Mosque. This was organised by a SCBB cord blood donor who wanted to inform and invite her community to be part of SCBB’s social mission of saving lives. This allowed some of the members of the mosque to clarify their misconceptions and understand the need for cord blood donation.



Be a part of our upcoming and exciting events!
5 July 2009 - Hair for Hope 2009 at Velocity from 12noon - 7pm.

Continuing Nursing Education at KKWomen's and Children's Hospital (KKWCH)

The SCBB spoke to nurses at KKWCH as part of their Continuing Nursing Education on “Stem Cell Collection: The Process of Harvesting and Transplantation”. The nurses were updated on what contributes to the success of good cord blood collection that will result in a banked cord blood unit. They were also updated on how the ObGyns, the Labour Room and Operating Theatre (OT) staff form an important part of the SCBB team.



SCBB Press Conference

The SCBB held a press conference in KKWomen's and Children's Hospital to announce the facilitation of its 21st cord blood transplant. The press conference was attended by various media representatives. There was extensive coverage on the SCBB's facilitation of 21 cord blood transplants in the main media; i.e. The Straits Times, Channel NewsAsia etc. on 18 February and 19 February 2009. There was also coverage of the SCBB in various parenting and lifestyle magazines in the months of April and May.



BHG's Baby Fair Outreach Talk

The SCBB was invited to speak at a Baby Fair organised by BHG at Bugis Junction in February 2009. The talk was opened to parents and parents-to-be. Our Medical Director, Dr. William Hwang, explained the importance of cord blood donation and how each donation plays a role in growing SCBB's inventory. This would prove to be a national resource for the public in providing cord blood units of the highest safety and quality to patients who are in need of a life-saving transplant.

