

What are the costs?

By Maryland law, a family that donates cord blood for public use may not be charged any fees for the collection, transportation, or storage of the cord blood. There are significant fees for private cord blood banking. Costs vary by cord blood bank and include fees for collection and transportation of the cord blood, as well as a yearly storage fee.

What are the benefits and risks of cord blood banking?

There are no physical risks for mother or baby in collecting cord blood. Your labor and the delivery of your baby will be the same, whether the cord blood is collected or not.

Cord blood donation to a public cord blood bank may help others. Your baby's cord blood may be used to provide a stem cell transplant for someone with a life-threatening medical condition. There are no costs to you for public cord blood donation.

Storing cord blood in a private cord blood bank may provide stem cells for future treatment of your baby or a close family member. There are costs for private cord blood banking.

In some cases, the cord blood collected does not provide enough stem cells or is unsuitable for some other reason for transplant. Currently, it is not known how long cord blood can be stored.

Many banks require the mother's blood to be tested for infectious diseases and genetic conditions. As a result, you may learn about a disease or condition that you did not know about previously.

If you decide to bank cord blood, read the consent form and other materials carefully. Talk with your health care provider about any concerns you have.

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For more information:

Please visit the following resources to learn more about uses for umbilical cord blood, and cord blood storage and donation options.

National Marrow Donor Program:

Provides information on public and private cord blood banking.

<https://bethematch.org>

Toll Free: 1-800-627-7692

Parent's Guide to Cord Blood Foundation:

Provides information for parents on cord blood banking and a list of public and private banks.

<http://www.parentsquidecordblood.org>

Health Resources and Services Administration:

Provides information about cord blood banks, uses for cord blood, donation and other options for cord blood storage.

<http://bloodcell.transplant.hrsa.gov>

This brochure is available online at:

<http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/mch/Pages/publications.aspx>

Maryland Department of Health Prevention and Health Promotion Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau

201 West Preston Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Phone: 410-767-6713

Toll Free: 1-977-4MD-DHMH (463-3464)

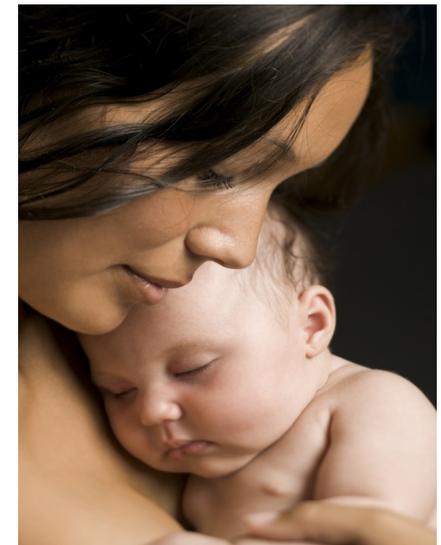
TTY Number: 1-800-735-2258

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Umbilical Cord Blood

Information for Parents-To-Be



Maryland Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Robert R. Neall, Secretary

Questions and Answers About Umbilical Cord Blood

What is cord blood?

Umbilical cord blood or “cord blood” is the blood left in the umbilical cord and placenta after a baby is born. This blood is usually discarded, but it can be saved and stored in a cord blood bank for future use. Cord blood contains stem cells. Stem cells are special cells which may be used to treat certain diseases in children and adults. These diseases include some cancers, blood disorders, and other life-threatening diseases. When stem cells are used to treat a disease, it is called a stem cell transplant.



How is cord blood collected?

Cord blood is collected by your health care provider or the staff at the hospital where you give birth. Cord blood is collected after the baby is born and the umbilical cord has been clamped and cut. There are no risks to the baby or mother when cord blood is collected. At times, it may not be possible to collect the cord blood. This may happen if complications develop during delivery. In this situation, cord blood can not be collected for medical reasons.

What is cord blood banking?

Cord blood banking means storing cord blood for future use. There are two types of cord blood banks, public and private.

Public Cord Blood Banking

You may decide to donate your baby's cord blood to a public cord blood bank. The cord blood will then be available to anyone who needs a stem cell transplant. The cord blood may also be used for research. Donated cord blood is the property of the public cord blood bank. Not all hospitals offer this service of donating cord blood to a public bank. In Maryland, only Mercy Medical Center and St. Agnes Hospital offer public cord blood banking. If you deliver at another hospital in Maryland, you may still be able to donate cord blood. Contact the National Marrow Donor Program at <https://bethematch.org>, click on “Donate cord blood”, or call 1-800-627-7692. Public banks do not charge to collect or store cord blood.

Private Cord Blood Banking

You may decide to store your baby's cord blood in a private cord blood bank for your own family's use. The cord blood will be saved for your baby or a close family member to possibly use in the future. Private banks charge for collecting and transporting the cord blood, and they also charge a yearly fee for storage. Private cord blood banking may be a good idea if you have a family member with a medical condition that could be treated with a stem cell transplant. Cord blood should not be stored as “insurance” for your baby. It may not be possible to use the stem cells to treat a disease the baby gets later because the same disease may already be in the stored stem cells.

What do I have to do?

If you decide to donate or store your baby's cord blood, you should contact a cord blood bank as early as possible, but not later than your 34th week of pregnancy (six weeks before your due date). The cord blood bank will explain how the cord blood will be collected, transported and stored, and explain anything you need to do to prepare. The cord blood bank will send you a medical history form, which includes questions about your health and your family's health history. You will also receive a consent form that explains what tests will be done on the cord blood. This form should also tell you how you will be notified if any of the test results are abnormal. Be sure to read the consent form very carefully before signing. Once you are approved by the cord blood bank, a cord blood collection kit will be sent to you. You must bring the collection kit with you to the hospital at the time of your delivery. Before your delivery, be sure to talk with your health care provider about your decision to bank cord blood.

