

## Cord Blood Banking

When your baby is born, there is an opportunity to collect stem cells from the umbilical cord. Stem cells are special cells that have the potential to become multiple different types of cells. Normally, stem cells are only found in the bone marrow but are present in umbilical cord blood, umbilical cord tissue and placental tissue.

Currently, there are rare blood born cancers or leukemia/lymphomas that have been treated successfully with stem cells from cord blood. The other potential therapies with stem cells are only theoretical at this time.

Cord blood companies are running clinical trials to see if stem cell therapy can be used to treat a wide variety of conditions. If your child is affected by a condition that is being studied, they may or may not qualify for a trial. You may also have to cover out-of-pocket costs for participation in a trial as the treatments involved are experimental.

Cord blood banking is expensive. The cost includes the collection, shipping and storage of the cord blood. There are a variety of companies that provide cord blood

banking. The average cost for collection and 18 years of storage is between \$2000 and \$3000. Currently, there is not a public cord blood bank in Pennsylvania.

Many physicians advise patients that cord blood collection is an insurance policy. It is very likely that your child may never need to use their cord blood. However, delivery is a unique opportunity to collect stem cells.

Please feel free to ask any questions on cord blood banking during your visits.