

# Private Cord Blood Banking vs. Public Donation

## Cord Blood Banks Pros and Cons

When it comes to banking cord blood, parents are faced with a choice, should we go with a private cord blood bank or donate to a public bank? This is not a choice to be taken lightly. It is important to make an informed decision that will suit your family's needs. Below you will find a list of pros and cons for each type of cord blood bank.

### Public Cord Blood Banks

#### Pros:

- 1) Accept free donations.
- 2) Make available cord blood to people in need free of charge.
- 3) Provide stored cord blood for medical research.
- 4) Makes cord blood stem cells accessible to the public.
- 5) The doctor will sometimes waive cord blood collection fees if parents are donating their cord blood to a public bank.

#### Cons:

- 1) Like any transplant, finding a suitable match can sometimes be a challenge.
- 2) Cord blood is not collected at every hospital, nor is collection possible at all times of the day.
- 3) There is no guarantee that the cord blood you donated or a suitable match will be available if a family member should need it.
- 4) Even if a match is found, there is a higher chance of rejection when receiving cord blood from non-relatives.
- 5) The bank owns your child's stored cord blood; the donating family does not have any priority over the stored blood.
- 6) You have no say in who receives your baby's cord blood.
- 7) Although donation is free, one must verify that one's health insurance policy covers the cost of stem cell transplantation.
- 8) It is more challenging for minorities to find donated cord blood that is a match for potential stem cell treatments through a public bank.

## Private Cord Blood Banks

### Pros:

- 1) Allow you to bank your baby's cord blood exclusively for your family's use.
- 2) If your child will need a stem cell transplant in the future, there will be no need to search for a suitable donor.
- 3) If a family member will need a stem cell transplant in the future, there is a higher chance that your baby's cord blood will be a suitable match.
- 4) The success rates of cord blood transplants using cord blood from a family member are twice that of transplants using a public donor's cord blood.
- 5) You own your child's stored cord blood.
- 6) You decide who uses your baby's umbilical cord blood.

### Cons:

- 1) For genetic diseases, a transfusion using a person's own cord blood may not be sufficient.
- 2) There is a fee for collection and storage.
- 3) Doesn't serve the "greater good".
- 4) Most insurance companies do not cover cord blood collection and banking; however, if there is a history of family disease, it may be covered. Verify with your insurance policy to see what is covered.

This is a family decision that should not be rushed. Take the time to discuss and weigh out all the options with your relatives and friends. Both public and private banks offer you a service that helps to secure the health of your child.

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### What are some of the different diseases treated by cord blood?