

Offering Hope to Asian and Pan-Asian Patients Across The Globe

“Your greatest chance of finding a stem cell donor for transplantation is actually from your own ethnicity.”

Cord blood stem cells are often routinely discarded after the birth of a newborn. However, not many people are aware that this precious resource is rich in blood forming stem cells that offers patients another shot at life.

Teng Hong Yi, a 12-year-old Singaporean boy, aspires to be an artist when he grows up. But his dreams were almost shattered three years ago when he was diagnosed with Chronic Myelogenous Leukaemia (CML) – one of the four major types of leukaemia that manifests slowly and causes too many white blood cells to form.

Hong Yi did not respond well to the prescribed drugs for his treatment. His haematologist had recommended a Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant (HSCT) as the best treatment option. However, he was unable to find a match amongst his siblings and family.

Hong Yi's mother, Regina Soong recalls, "When I was crying, he would also be crying. He knew that there was something wrong but he couldn't understand what was really wrong with him."

With the help of SCBB, Hong Yi found a fully matched cord blood unit (CBU) from SCBB's pool of over 8,600 multi-ethnic CBU's within three months. He is one of the 100 beneficiaries to receive an unrelated cord blood unit facilitated by SCBB.

"Your greatest chance of finding a stem cell donor for transplantation is actually from your own ethnicity. Hence, it is important to have more Asian donors to increase the success rate in finding a suitable match for patients of Asian lineage in Singapore and around the world," SCBB's Medical Director, Dr William Hwang explained.

To date, SCBB has facilitated more than 100 unrelated cord blood transplants in Singapore and around the globe. With the goal of storing 10,000 donated cord blood units from Asians of various ethnicities, SCBB will give Singaporeans up to 80% chance of finding a suitable match for an unrelated HSCT.



For more information

On public cord blood banking, the SCBB, presentations or on becoming a donor, 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



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CORD connection

A quarterly publication by Singapore Cord Blood Bank
MICA (P) 092/09/2012 • Aug 2012



100

And Counting!

“The increase in cord blood units will significantly enhance the success rate of finding a match to an 80% chance rather than the current 40 – 60%.”



On 15th March 2012, the Singapore Cord Blood Bank (SCBB) marked a significant milestone upon facilitating its 100th unrelated cord blood transplant.

Cord blood is the blood that is left in the umbilical cord and placenta, after a mother has given birth. It is an exceptionally rich source of haematopoietic stem cells, the life-saving essence which replaces unhealthy blood by forming health ones.

During the press conference, Dr William Hwang, Medical Director of SCBB, stepped forward to encourage mothers to donate their cord blood to help boost the target number of cord blood units to at least 10,000 by the end of 2014.

"The increase in units will significantly enhance the success rate of finding a match to an 80% chance rather than the current 40 – 60%." He emphasized, "A patient's most opportune chance of finding a successful match in stem cell donations is from contributions of the same ethnicity."



Stressing the importance of a larger pool of selection, Dr Hwang also stated that due to the lack of donors of Asian lineage, only 20% to 35% of Asians worldwide are able to find a suitable match. Unknown to many, the chances of finding a match within siblings are only one in four. Thus, the importance of SCBB's mission to increase the inventory of Cord Blood Units in order to boost the probability of patients finding successful matches.

Presenting two sides of a coin, the press conference featured both donor Mandy Loh, and another unrelated beneficiary, Teng Hong Yi. Both parties expressed their enthusiasm in advocating the cause of SCBB, by sharing their personal experiences as testimonials.

"The benefits of cord blood banking were very abstract to me when I first donated. But to see an actual recipient who has benefited from the donated cord blood, it really touched me", Mandy commenting on the significance of how donating impacted her life and made a difference.

At another side of the room, a mother was embracing her son while posing for the cameras. The young 12 year-old boy, Teng Hong Yi, is a beneficiary who received a successful matching cord blood unit after being diagnosed with a form of leukemia three years ago.

Regina Song, mother of Hong Yi, also expressed gratitude in seeing her son being able to grow up healthily and doing all the things a normal child could.

The seven-year-old non-government and not-for-profit public cord blood bank raises its funds on its own and does not charge for collecting or storing its donated cord blood units.

Making A Difference One Cord Blood At A Time

The notion of a cord blood donation was initially very theoretical to Mandy Loh, who was only aware of how donated cord blood will be stored into a bank to be eventually used by someone.

She has never imagined how meeting a beneficiary from the inventory of donated cord blood units to the SCBB would give her a whole new perspective on cord blood donation.

"The beauty of birth, the beauty of having a child, we should share that joy with others by giving hope to other people who may be suffering", Mandy mentioned.

She had learnt about cord blood donation whilst browsing through some reading material during a wait at the obstetrician's clinic. After much research and deliberation regarding the matter, she and her husband had decided that instead of discarding it, they would donate their child's cord blood. In June 2011, after the birth of their son, Cristian, they donated his cord blood to SCBB.

Believing in SCBB's mission to increase their cord blood inventory to surpass 10,000 cord blood units, Mandy blogged about her decision to donate her child's cord blood on Singapore's online parenthood portal www.maybebaby.sg, where she is a resident blogger.

Via this channel of blogging, Mandy hopes to raise awareness amongst the public, and for future mothers to donate their child's cord blood.

An excerpt taken from her blog post, she called out to readers to "Imagine – if everybody donated their baby's cord blood at birth, people in need of transplants would have a much better chance of finding a suitable match, thereby increasing the usefulness of each stored unit".

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Did You Know?

1. There are more than 6,000 adults & children world-wide, searching for a life-saving stem cell unit.
2. Contrary to belief, there is only a 1 in 4 chance that siblings would garner a suitable match of stem cells for a Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant (HSCT) within the family.
3. SCBB has facilitated more than 100 unrelated cord blood transplants in Singapore and around the globe.
4. SCBB's donated cord blood inventory, has treated 24 types of medical conditions which include 13 types of blood cancers and 11 kinds of blood disorders.



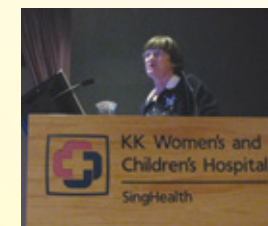
Previous Events

KKH In-Service Talk

Nurses play a crucial role in the collection of high quality umbilical cord blood. The SCBB was invited to present during an in-house talk at KK Women's and Children's Hospital on 12 April 2012. The presentation was to update and educate nurses about the importance of the quality of umbilical cord blood collected and its impact on blood stem cell transplants.

Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant Forum

The SCBB hosted a forum on 24 April 2012 at KK Women's & Children's Hospital in conjunction with visitors from World Marrow Donor Association (WMDA). Dr. Machteld Oudshoorn, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and Ms Lydia Foeken, Chief Operating Officer (COO) shared their learnings and experiences, and up-to-date information on international recommendations relating to unrelated search and donor activities. An audience of 53 transplant-related and healthcare professionals joined Dr. Oudshoorn and Ms. Foeken during their presentation.



Children Cancer Foundation – Hair for Hope

To help to expand the community of support for childhood cancer, the SCBB were present at the 10th consecutive annual Hair for Hope, organised by the Children Cancer Foundation on 28 and 29 July 2012 at Vivo City. With guest of honour, Mr. Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Education (GOH), lending his support we were able to raise awareness and educate expectant mothers about how they can help support childhood cancer through a simple process of donating their cord blood to the SCBB.



SingHealth Duke – NUS Public Forum: Pregnancy to Parenthood - Tips from the Expert

Calling all mothers-to-be! Find out everything you need to know about your baby's health and development at this special forum of pregnancy and childcare experts, brought to you by the SCBB and SingHealth Duke-NUS.

Date : 4 August 2012, Saturday
Venue : Padang Ballroom at Raffles City Convention Centre, Level 4
Time : 2.00pm - 4.00pm

Upcoming Events

SingHealth Transplant Awareness Week 2012 Awareness Roadshow (27 – 31 August 2012)

SingHealth Transplant comprises of eight well-established transplant services which covers major organs and tissues. All eight transplant services have a robust track record of positive outcomes for recipients and donors alike. To date, more than 5,000 transplants have been performed, giving new life and new hope to many patients and their families. SingHealth Transplant also works to raise awareness of organ and tissue donation in Singapore.

Hear the heart-warming stories from patients who have benefited from individual transplant programmes and the opportunities it has given them and their families. Do look out for us at the following locations and drop by to say hello!

Date : 27 Aug 2012, Monday
Venue : SOC - Specialist Outpatient Clinic
Time : 11.00am – 4.30pm

Date : 29 Aug 2012, Wednesday
Venue : SNEC - Singapore National Eye Centre
Time : 11.00am – 4.30pm

Date : 31 Aug 2012, Friday
Venue : KKWCH – KK Women's & Children's Hospital
Time : 11.00am – 4.30pm

SingHealth Transplant Awareness Walk, 1 September 2012

SingHealth staff, patient ambassadors and volunteers will be on a walkabout to spread the message on organ and tissue donation. Free SingHealth Transplant water bottles and information booklets will be given away!

Look out for us in the vicinity of these MRT stations: Ang Mo Kio, Toa Payoh, Tampines, Bedok, Hougang and Serangoon from 12:30pm to 2pm!