

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CordLife released cord blood to treat cerebral palsy, a medical first in Singapore

Key Points

- CordLife released a cord blood unit for the first time to treat a case of cerebral palsy in Singapore.
- Two-year-old patient, Georgia Conn received an infusion of her own cord blood stem cells.
- The safe and simple procedure has been performed on 97 patients at Duke University in the United States.
- After the infusion, Georgia has become more vocal and has a renewed enthusiasm for exercise.

Hong Kong, 2 December 2009 – CordLife, the cord blood banking leader in Asia Pacific, announced the release of a cord blood unit for the first time to treat a case of cerebral palsy in Singapore.

In this breakthrough medical procedure, the patient, two-year-old Georgia Conn, was infused with her own cord blood stem cells in the hope to repair damaged brain tissue as a result of injury at birth, which currently has no cure. These stem cells were stored with CordLife by her parents in the eventuality that they might be needed in future.

Cord blood is the preferred source of stem cells for transplantation worldwide. So far, more than 14,000 patients suffering from over 80 diseases have been treated successfully with cord blood stem cells.

Mr Michael Conn, Georgia’s father, commented, “We are very grateful to Dr Keith Goh and CordLife for making this safe treatment possible in Singapore. Without them, we would have had to travel to the United States, which was fraught with potential problems for such a simple procedure. Our experience reaffirms our decision to bank Georgia’s cord blood and the choice of our cord blood bank. They delivered their quality promise when it mattered the most to us.”

“Since the infusion of Georgia’s cord blood, we noticed that she is more vocal and has a renewed enthusiasm for exercise. She is a lot happier and more comfortable at her regular physiotherapy and occupational therapy sessions. We are heartened with her progress and hope that many other sufferers in Singapore can soon benefit from this procedure.”

Commenting on this pioneering medical treatment, Mr Steven Fang, Group CEO of CordLife Limited said, “We feel very privileged to be a part of this pioneering treatment in Singapore. Our in-depth knowledge of cord blood banking practices and standards recognised by many gold standards such as the AABB, has helped ensure that we deliver high quality cord blood stem cells to support such a treatment.”

“Storing a baby’s cord blood is increasingly seen to be an essential health care need, especially with a recent study in “Biology Blood Marrow Transplant” showing that as many as 1 in 200 people may require stem cell transplantation in their lifetime. While the current use of cord blood is predominantly related to certain cancers and blood disorders, researchers around the world are unlocking the autologous (the patient’s own) use of cord blood stem cells for cellular therapy to help repair damaged or diseased tissue. We believe once these advances translate to successful therapies, more medical options may be available to families who have stored their children’s cord blood.”

This pioneering treatment has been initiated extensively in the United States and Europe via clinical trials to determine the mechanism of action. The most well-known case study involving 97 patients was conducted at Duke University in the United States by Dr Joanne Kurtzberg, professor of paediatrics and pathology, and expert transplant physician.

Dr Keith Goh, lead clinician and neurosurgeon said: “Stem cells, especially those derived from cord blood, have enormous potential for new growth and regeneration of damaged tissue. It is estimated that 1 in every 500 babies is inflicted with cerebral palsy. For these children and other patients with similar neurological insults, it is possible that stem cell treatment holds the key to improving their lives. Most importantly, since these treatments are autologous, they are safe and viable.”

Consequently, a clinical trial led by Dr Goh will be initiated to bring this exciting new application to Singapore.

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About CordLife

CordLife operates Asia Pacific’s most experienced and largest network of stem cell banks with full processing and cryopreservation storage facilities in Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia and India as well as marketing operations in Macau, Philippines and Thailand. The Group’s in-depth knowledge of stem cell banking practices and standards are recognised by many international Quality Standard organizations such as the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB), Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). In 2006, CordLife became the only stem cell bank in the world to be awarded the prestigious World Economic Forum ‘Technology Pioneer’. CordLife is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange, under the stock code; CBB. For more information on the CordLife group of companies, please visit www.cordlife.com.

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