



Texas Cord Blood Bank[®]

A PROGRAM OF GENCURE

Cord Blood Donation is a Baby Step for a Cure!

THE NEED IS GREAT

Every 3 minutes, someone is diagnosed with a blood cancer such as leukemia.

For many, a stem cell transplant from a cord blood donation is the best or only chance for a cure.

A MATCH FOR MANY

70% of patients do not have a fully matched bone marrow donor in their families.

Almost half the patients searching for a match will not be able to find an adult matching donor.

HOPE FOR A CURE

For many not able to find a matching adult bone marrow donor, hope exists in a cord blood transplant.

Some 900 patients in Texas currently are searching for cord blood, marrow or stem cell matches.

Since 2005, the Texas Cord Blood Bank has worked with Texas hospitals to collect and bank nearly 12,000 units for the national Be The Match[®] registry.

More than 400 lifesaving cord blood units have been provided from TCBB for transplant.

Texas has more than 500,000 births yearly, many from which cord blood could be collected.

Cord blood helps save lives. GenCure, home of the Texas Cord Blood Bank (TCBB), the only state-sanctioned public cord blood bank in Texas, proposes to increase cord blood donations by introducing two new programs.

Cord blood is the remaining blood in the umbilical cord and placenta after a baby is delivered. It is a rich source of blood-forming stem cells, an alternative to bone marrow transplantation in treating life-threatening diseases such as leukemia, lymphomas and sickle cell anemia. Cord blood collection begins once the delivery process is complete and both mother and baby are declared healthy. Cord blood stem cells are **not** the same as embryonic stem cells. **Cord blood is painless** to donate, can be **stored** frozen and leads to **fewer** cases of graft vs. host disease after transplant.

'Baby Steps for a Cure' – For Our Hospital Partners

This initiative is designed to increase the quality of umbilical cord blood collection in Central and South Texas by engaging hospital staff at participating cord blood collection sites. GenCure would:

- Develop and implement educational curriculum promoting the need and use of cord blood cells for patient transplants.
- Promote best-practice techniques to collect larger cord blood units to increase the number of units meeting banking criteria.
- Supply nurses and doctors with reference workbooks, including an onboarding brochure explaining collection participation.
- Award plaques to hospitals that complete the onboarding process, showcasing the Collector of the Quarter program for largest volume collected.
- Host an annual training/appreciation luncheon for participants to maintain and strengthen working relationships.

'Born a Hero' – For Expectant Mothers

This campaign is designed to increase cord blood donations by engaging expectant mothers and obstetricians to raise awareness of the lifesaving qualities of cord blood and the public TCBB. GenCure would:

- Expand education about the growing use and versatility of cord blood to treat life-threatening diseases.
- Send a community engagement representative to meet with and educate OB staff and expectant mothers at birthing classes and community events.
- Distribute brochures with a "contact us" card to educate expectant mothers and their doctors about the ease and importance of donating cord blood.
- Provide mothers with a "Born a Hero" bracelet, certificate and commemorative bib upon signing of consent forms.

Visit our website: GenCure.org

Connect with us on social media: search Connect for Life

Valentina DeLeon

When she was 5 months old, Valentina DeLeon, who was born in May 2010, had difficulty gaining weight and had a constant low-grade fever.

Her parents, Edna and Jesse, from Pharr, Texas, took her to doctor after doctor and could get no answers. When she was 9 months old, Valentina finally was diagnosed with severe combined immunodeficiency disorder (SCID).

According to the National Institutes of Health, SCID is a rare disease caused by defects in any of several possible genes, making victims highly susceptible to life-threatening viral, bacterial and fungal infections. Only some 40-100 babies are diagnosed each year with the disease, but more children may die of SCID-related infections before they're diagnosed.

The most effective treatment for SCID is a bone marrow transplant, but about 70 percent of those needing a marrow transplant can't find a match in their families, says the National Marrow Donor Program. Umbilical cord blood is rich in stem cells that can help patients such as Valentina rebuild their immune systems, and cord blood transplants are a viable alternative to a bone marrow transplant.

Valentina received a cord blood transplant in April 2011, and she's been a healthy girl ever since.

"I'm never going to forget everything we went through, but it was all worth it," said Edna DeLeon, Valentina's mom. "Every morning that we wake up and see that she's alive and in perfect health, we praise the Lord. I feel blessed."

Edna DeLeon says donating cord blood is one of the most selfless things parents can do. Because of a family's generosity, Valentina soon will be 7 years old. She's a straight-A student, is in cheerleading and loves doing arts and crafts. She's very active, and she still travels to San Antonio every year for checkups.

"We've talked to her about what happened," Edna says. "I explained that she was in the hospital, and we have to check her blood every year and pray for the doctors and everyone who helped make her well, and thank God for them. She doesn't know exactly what happened, but she's beginning to understand.

"I told her she's alive and healthy because God sent another baby to help her."

