

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 002
(A-20)

Introduced by: Young Physicians Section

Subject: Increasing Public Umbilical Cord Blood Donations in Transplant Centers

Referred to: Reference Committee on Amendments to Constitution and Bylaws

1 Whereas, Allogeneic stem cell transplants continue to save lives, reaching over 20,000
2 procedures per year in the United States¹; and

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4 Whereas, Allogeneic stem cell therapy can only save lives in patients matched with a donor;
5 and

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7 Whereas, Umbilical cord blood stem cells offer clinical advantages over traditional stem cell
8 transplants in select scenarios²; and

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10 Whereas, Umbilical cord blood transplants increase the ethnic diversity of patients eligible for
11 transplant;³ and

12
13 Whereas, The American Society for Transplantation and Cellular Therapy⁴, the American
14 College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists⁵, and the American Academy of Pediatrics⁶ all
15 support public (altruistic) donation of cord blood when possible; and

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17 Whereas, Public donation of cord blood is difficult if the birthing hospital does not support public
18 cord donation; and

19
20 Whereas, Very few hospitals support in-house public cord blood donation infrastructure - only
21 two hospitals in Ohio, and three each in New York and Massachusetts⁷; and

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23 Whereas, Many hospitals which provide comprehensive care including both childbirths and stem
24 cell transplants are notably absent from these lists; therefore be it

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26 RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association encourage all hospitals with obstetrics
27 programs to make available to patients and reduce barriers to public (altruistic) umbilical cord
28 blood donation (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

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30 RESOLVED, That our AMA encourage the availability of altruistic cord blood donations in all
31 states. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 03/04/20

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

E-6.1.5 Umbilical Cord Blood Banking

Transplants of umbilical cord blood have been recommended or performed to treat a variety of conditions. Cord blood is also a potential source of stem and progenitor cells with possible therapeutic applications. Nonetheless, collection and storage of cord blood raise ethical concerns with regard to patient safety, autonomy, and potential for conflict of interest. In addition, storage of umbilical cord blood in private as opposed to public banks can raise concerns about access to cord blood for transplantation.

Physicians who provide obstetrical care should be prepared to inform pregnant women of the various options regarding cord blood donation or storage and the potential uses of donated samples.

Physicians who participate in collecting umbilical cord blood for storage should:

- (a) Ensure that collection procedures do not interfere with standard delivery practices or the safety of a newborn or the mother.
- (b) Obtain informed consent for the collection of umbilical cord blood stem cells before the onset of labor whenever feasible. Physicians should disclose their ties to cord blood banks, public or private, as part of the informed consent process.
- (c) Decline financial or other inducements for providing samples to cord blood banks.
- (d) Encourage women who wish to donate umbilical cord blood to donate to a public bank if one is available when there is low risk of predisposition to a condition for which umbilical cord blood cells are therapeutically indicated:
 - (i) in view of the cost of private banking and limited likelihood of use;
 - (ii) to help increase availability of stem cells for transplantation.
- (e) Discuss the option of private banking of umbilical cord blood when there is a family predisposition to a condition for which umbilical cord stem cells are therapeutically indicated.
- (f) Continue to monitor ongoing research into the safety and effectiveness of various methods of cord blood collection and use.

AMA Principles of Medical Ethics: I,V

The Opinions in this chapter are offered as ethics guidance for physicians and are not intended to establish standards of clinical practice or rules of law.

Issued: 2016

References:

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2. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Cord Blood Stem Cell Transplantation. 2 Aug 2007. Available at https://www.lls.org/sites/default/files/file_assets/cordbloodstemcelltransplantation.pdf.
3. Be the Match. Cord blood donation frequently asked questions. Accessed 22 Apr 2019. Available at <https://bethematch.org/support-the-cause/donate-cord-blood/cord-blood-faqs/>.
4. American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation. ASBMT POSITION STATEMENT Collection and Preservation of Cord Blood for Personal Use. Biology of Blood and Marrow Transplantation 14:364 (2008). Available at https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/ASBMT/43a1f41f-55cb-4c97-9e78-c03e867db505/UploadedImages/ASBMT_Cord_Blood_Position_Statement.pdf.
5. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecology. ACOG Committee Opinion Number 771. 21 Feb 2019. Available at <https://www.acog.org/Clinical-Guidance-and-Publications/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Genetics/Umbilical-Cord-Blood-Banking>.
6. Section on Hematology/Oncology and Section on Allergy/Immunology, American Academy of Pediatrics. Cord Blood Banking for Potential Future Transplantation. Pediatrics Jan 2007, 119 (1) 161-164; DOI: 10.1542/peds.2006-2900. Available at <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/119/1/165.full.pdf>.
7. Be the Match. List of Participating Hospitals. Accessed 22 Apr 2019. Available at <https://bethematch.org/support-the-cause/donate-cord-blood/how-to-donate-cord-blood/participating-hospitals/>.