



StemLife

TODAY'S DECISION, TOMORROW'S LIFELINE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



www.stemlife.com.au

1 COLLECTION OF CORD BLOOD SAMPLE

- **Will StemLife proactively contact the labour and delivery staff for you (or are parents responsible for keeping them informed)?**

A: A letter is sent to your attending doctor to notify them of your decision to use StemLife to process your cord blood. We ask your doctor to sign the "Doctor's Request Form". It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure the collection kit is taken into the delivery suite/operating theatre and to remind the attending doctor/midwife to collect the blood product.

Your hospital will be notified of your intent to collect your baby's cord blood with StemLife.

- **Is the cord blood collected before or after delivery of the placenta?**

A: At most hospitals and in most circumstances it will be prior to the delivery of the placenta. However, as the delivery of the placenta can occasionally be shorter than the required collection time, collection after delivery of the placenta may occur.

Either method can be used and the volumes collected are generally comparable.

- **What storage container does StemLife use? Vials or a bag?**

A: StemLife collect and store in 'Closed System' bags. Bags are more resistant to impact and handling.

- **What equipment is provided in the kit for the Doctor? Are there any spares?**

A: All necessary equipment is provided in the collection kit. Should the kit be damaged or lost prior to the birth, please contact StemLife immediately. Every effort will be made to replace the kit in sufficient time for the cord blood to be collected.

- **What instruction tools are provided for the attending doctor?**

A: As cord blood collection is becoming more recognised as a regular part of the birthing process most Obstetricians and midwives are familiar with the process already. All attending doctors are offered education and familiarization sessions by StemLife. StemLife is committed to further inservice training of both midwives in labour wards, and Obstetricians where necessary.

2 SHIPPING & HANDLING

- **Is shipping included in the contract?**

A: A transport fee from the hospital to the processing laboratory will be charged only for collections outside Brisbane, Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. A quote will be provided upon request. A courier charge of \$150 will apply for collections outside of Brisbane, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast.

- **Does StemLife provide secure chain-of-custody handling?**

A: Yes. StemLife ensures that there is somebody responsible for the safety of the cord blood from the point of pick-up at the hospital through to final long-term storage facility.

- **On weekends, are the laboratory staff in-house or on-call?**

A: StemLife's laboratory operates every day.

3 LABORATORY TESTING & ACCREDITATION

- **Will StemLife notify the parents of the time at which the cord blood arrived, and the time at which it was processed?**

A: No. Cord blood material suffers negligible degradation if it is properly collected, packed and processed within 48 hours following collection. StemLife aims to ensure that all cord product is processed within 36 hours. At completion of the processing and storage process, cord-blood details will be confirmed in writing to the parents.

- **What tests are performed on the mother's blood?**

A: StemLife tests for contamination, Hepatitis B and C, HIV, CMV, Syphilis and HTLV. If the mother's blood tests come back positive for any of the above, StemLife will notify the mother's doctor for further clinical management.

- **Will StemLife notify us of any abnormal results? (Infectious disease markers)?**

A: Yes. If there are any "positive" results from either the mother's blood samples or the cord blood, the parents are notified immediately and confidentially, either by StemLife or the doctor.

- **Is StemLife accredited?**

A: Yes. StemLife is fully licensed with the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).
Licence number: MI-19042007-L1001830-11

4 PROCESSING

- **Is the blood stored whole or processed?**

A: StemLife processes the cord blood to extract the stem cells for long term storage. This ensures that the cord blood product (mainly stem cells) is in the best possible form for long term storage and subsequent usage.

- **What is the minimum volume StemLife will accept for storage?**

A: StemLife aims for an optimal volume of between 60ml and 150ml. StemLife will store as little as 20ml, as improvement in expansion technology indicates that this volume is usable. However, below this volume we discuss storage options with the parents and will follow their instruction. (It used to be argued that storing smaller samples was useless, because they did not meet the required volume for transplant. However, the technology now exists to expand the cell count in the laboratory prior to transplant, and this process has been used successfully in clinical trials.)

- **Is the blood stored as a single unit or several samples?**

A: StemLife stores the cord blood product in a dual storage system for greater safety and future flexibility. There are important advantages to freezing in portions. The main advantage is that dual sample storage allows for possible multiple utilisation for the child.

5 STORAGE FACILITY

- **Does StemLife operate their own storage facility, or lease space in one? AND in what type of facility will my cord product be located?**

A: StemLife operate their own long-term storage facility. The storage unit is in a hospital environment. The unit provides 24 hour security, triple back-up alarm systems, backup electric generation and liquid nitrogen systems.

- **Are the cord blood samples in a dedicated freezer?**

A: The vapour phase nitrogen freeze tanks are solely used for the purpose of storing StemLife cord blood product. No other material is stored in the tanks.

- **Does StemLife freeze in liquid or vapour nitrogen?**

A: StemLife uses vapour phase nitrogen. This ensures no transmission of contaminants from the surface of one container to that of another.

- **What type of notification will we receive after Storage?**

A: StemLife will provide you with notification when your baby's cord blood stem cells are safely stored in the long term storage facility. StemLife will confirm all personal details, including mothers name, confirm that test results have been returned "negative", the volume of cord blood collected, volume of stem cells, the amount stored and the date that processing and storage took place.

- **Does StemLife's contract state that the storage fee is fixed, or may it increase later?**

A: New prices include storage fee for 18 years. Previous contracts with annual storage fee component will be increased only in line with CPI.

6 COMPANY STABILITY

- **Is the company involved in bio-technology research and development?**

A: No. StemLife has no links with any research and development facility nor will it undertake any stem cell research or development, either embryonic, cord blood or adult in origin. **StemLife's sole purpose is to provide the most secure, safe, ethical collection and storage of your baby's cord blood stem cell product. StemLife hold this material in trust for you.** We cannot and will not utilise nor allow any other person, company or research facility to access your baby's blood product without your instructions in writing.

- **What other medical services does the company perform?**

A: StemLife provides no services other than stem cell collection, processing and storage.

- **Who directs the day-to-day business of the company?**

A: StemLife's board of directors is comprised of an experienced scientist, two specialist Medical Practitioners, three leading businessmen (includes one with over 15 years experience in the hospital and medical environment), and a CEO with over 30 years experience in the finance industry.

7 CONSUMER RIGHTS

- **In the event that StemLife ever suffered financial difficulties, what would happen to my cord blood samples?**
A: "Escrow" arrangements with another cord blood bank will ensure cord blood product security.
- **If the storage fee is not paid, what happens to the cord blood?**
A: StemLife will use its best endeavours to contact the parents or guardian by telephone and notifying them in writing that should fees not be paid by a designated date then the cord blood product will be discarded in 90 days.
- **Does the company take ANY portion of the cord blood for proprietary purposes, or does 100% go into storage?**
A: 100% of the product is stored on behalf of your child.
- **Are there any late enrolment fees charged?**
A: Yes. Early registration is essential. If registration is left too late there may not be sufficient time for assembly and delivery of your collection kit, notification and approval by your doctor etc.
Registration received less than 7 days before your estimated delivery date will attract a late fee of \$150.00.
- **What is the fee for a multiple pregnancy for cord blood samples from multiple births?**
A: A discount for multiple births is offered. Refer 'payment options'.
- **If we have a second or subsequent baby, is there a discount?**
A: Yes, a discount is offered for previous customers. Refer 'payment options'.
- **If the cord blood collection is small or contaminated, are parents offered any refunds?**
A: Yes, refer to your contract for refund amounts at each stage of the process.
- **Is the storage fee guaranteed fixed?**
A: The new pricing is all inclusive of storage fees for 18 years. Previous contracts with separate storage cost component will increase by CPI, annually, each December.



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