

## **Prof Dr Menaka: Babies cord blood a life-saving source to treat blood related diseases**

**KUALA LUMPUR, 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2016** -- Professor Dr Menaka Hariharan, Medical Director of StemLife Berhad today urged parents to store their new born baby's cord blood as it is considered a life-saving source to treat blood related diseases.

"The main reason is simple. Cord blood contains stem cells that are a 100 percent biological match to the new born, and can be used to help treat diseases such as Leukaemia, Lymphoma, Thalassaemia, certain metabolic and immune system disorders," she explained during an exclusive visit to StemLife laboratories for the media.

Professor Dr. Menaka added, "There are clinical trials around the world investigating the regenerative ability of stem cells from cord blood to help the human body heal itself in cases of cerebral palsy, autism and traumatic brain injuries to name a few."

By storing both cord blood and cord lining, recovery of three types of stem cells is possible thus increasing one's option for more possible therapeutic applications in the future, she said.

"The process of extracting the cord blood is very safe. It takes only 5 to 10 minutes from the time the baby is born. And this is the only period of opportunity to save it. As one can save it only during child birth, it is considered once in a lifetime opportunity."

During the laboratory visit, Dr Maneerat, Lab Director of StemLife Berhad gave the media a walkthrough of how the cord blood is extracted, transported and tested. The steps include the following:

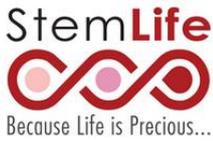
**Step 1:** Doctor cuts the cord. Baby is separated from placenta.

**Step 2:** Collection bag needle is inserted into the umbilical cord vein.

**Step 3:** Blood is drained from the cord into collection bag by gravity flow.

**Step 4:** Once the cord blood is collected, the collection bag will be placed in a specially designed collection kit and transported to the laboratory for processing.

**Step 5:** Once it arrives at the lab, technologist will perform a series of tests and assess the amount of stem cell collected. Upon completion, the cord blood stem cell will be stored in a FDA-approved multi-compartment Cryobag and cryopreserved for long term at -196°C.



Speaking at the media tour, Encik Zahrein Redza, Chief Operating Officer of StemLife Berhad said current awareness on the benefits on cord blood banking is still low.

“Based on United Nation Population Division for Malaysia, there are about 500,000 deliveries in 2015. However, our internal analysis showed only 14% of the parents out of the 500,000 deliveries, saved their babies’ cord blood,” affirmed Encik Zahrein.

He added that the awareness and education on cord blood and cord lining in general and its benefits has to be prevalent as the need to keep the baby’s cord blood and cord lining has become more and more important to treat blood related diseases and other potential medical conditions.”

“We are optimistic with heightened education and increase in publicity on the benefits of cord blood banking, parents can leverage on the advancement of medical technology today and in the future as more potential use of babies’ cord blood and cord lining other than to treat diseases are being researched, tested and explored,” Encik Zahrein enthused.

StemLife is a stem cell bank licensed by the Ministry of Health Malaysia under the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services (PHFS) Act 1998. Since its establishment in 2001, StemLife has been in the forefront of medical breakthroughs pertaining to cord blood stem cell and cord lining.

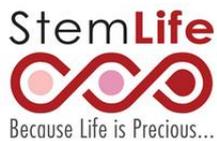
The company also provides its clients and/or parents one of the most comprehensive protection possible for their children every step of the way, from cord blood and cord lining collection to testing, processing and storage, ensuring quality as the number one priority.

With 15 years of proven expertise in stem cell banking in Malaysia, StemLife has to date banked in more than 53,000 cord blood stem cells and recorded 15 successful cord blood transplant which involved the treatment for Thalassaemia, Cerebral Palsy, Brain Injury and Leukaemia.

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## **About StemLife Bhd**

StemLife is a stem cell bank licensed by the Ministry of Health Malaysia under the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services (PHFS) Act 1998. Established in 2001, StemLife is the first and only cord blood bank public listed on the MESDAQ board since 2006 offering end-to-end stem cell services of the highest standard and quality through cutting-edge technology and lab processing in accordance with international standards. Collectively, more than 60,000 families have entrusted their baby’s cord blood stem cells with StemLife in its Malaysia and Thailand facilities.



As of February 2016, Cordlife Group Limited took a major 89.88% stake in StemLife Berhad to be a subsidiary of Cordlife Group Limited, which is listed on Singapore Stock Exchange (SGX), making StemLife part of the largest cord blood banking group in Asia region with presence in 7 countries, 140 cities and more than 120,000 cord blood units stored.

To-date, StemLife has successfully released 15 cord blood units for transplantation and assisted in stem cell applications for over 500 cases.

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