



# CORD BLOOD DONATION

is free, painless,  
and can save lives.

## What is cord blood?

Cord blood is blood that remains in the placenta and umbilical cord after birth. During pregnancy, this blood is vital for your baby, but after birth the blood is generally considered expendable. In most cases it is destroyed.

## What is its therapeutic value?

Cord blood contains stem cells similar to those found in bone marrow, which can be used to reconstitute the blood system. Once collected, cord blood can be frozen, stored and made available to a patient requiring a transplant. We offer you the opportunity to donate your cord blood to the French National Cord Blood Network. Your donation will give hope to patients waiting for a transplant, and a real chance for treatment.

### Special case

If someone in your family suffers from an illness that requires a cord blood transplant, French law allows your doctor to request the preservation of your cord blood for use by your family.



## Consent

Cord blood donations are made freely, anonymously, and free of charge. Any donation requires your signed consent. As part of this process, you will complete a prenatal medical questionnaire containing questions on you and your family. To guarantee the safety of the patient receiving the donated cord blood unit, your answers must be truthful. Your decision on whether or not to donate cord blood will have no effect on the quality of care you and your child receive.

## Collection

Cord blood is collected minutes after birth, once the umbilical cord has been cut, but while the placenta is still in the womb. Cord blood collection does not affect the normal delivery procedure. It is painless and poses no risk to you or your child. In the event that special medical procedures are required, your midwife may decide not to collect your cord blood.



## After collection

Your cord blood unit is transported to a bank that is a member of the French National Cord Blood Network. If the unit meets the biological criteria established by the network (sufficient volume and number of cells), further tests are carried out on your blood samples, collected after you gave birth (HIV, hepatitis B and C, syphilis, HTLV, CMV, EBV, and toxoplasmosis). If all the tests are positive, the cord blood unit is stored in liquid nitrogen along with your blood samples, in the event that further tests are necessary.

## Two months later

Before the cord blood bank can approve your donation, they need to see your child's health record two months after its birth. Your maternity clinic will tell you which documents are required. A sample cannot be safely administered to a patient without these documents.

## Health record

A certificate will be attached to your child's health record stating that their cord blood was collected for an allogeneic transplantation, i.e. a transplantation where the donor and the recipient are two different people. The certificate will allow your doctor to notify the French Biomedicine Agency if required.

## Anonymity

Each cord blood unit is assigned a number that guarantees your anonymity. It is then registered in the French national registry, which centralises all applications for transplantations. Transplants are chosen based on their level of compatibility with the recipient, and their quantity of cells. You may be contacted by the bank, which will inform you in any event by mail on how your donated cord blood was used.





## Donate to scientific research

If your donation does not meet the criteria established by the French National Cord Blood Network, your cord blood is either destroyed according to approved procedures, or used for scientific research in strict compliance with French regulations.

## Commercial blood banks are prohibited in France

Commercial blood banks allow couples to store their cord blood, for a fee, for the future exclusive use of the donor (autologous transplant). However, there is no scientific basis for this approach ([www.agence-biomedecine.fr](http://www.agence-biomedecine.fr)). No commercial cord blood banks have been approved by the French health authorities. Furthermore, packaging and exporting of cord blood is an illegal practice punishable by law.

## The French National Cord Blood Network: accredited banks and maternity clinics

Only banks and maternity clinics that belong to the French National Cord Blood Network are accredited by the health authorities to coordinate the collection, preparation and storage of cord blood units. The units are then made available to any patient at any time. Through anonymous, free donations, the network guarantees traceability, high technical standards, and equal access to treatment for everyone.

## Personal data protection

All personal or family information collected is treated as confidential, as recommended by the French National Commission for Information Technology and Civil Liberties (CNIL). To comply with ethical transplantation standards, the banks ensure that cord blood donations remain anonymous.



## CONSENT FORM



The Générale de Santé Foundation runs a leading philanthropic initiative to collect cord blood stem cells in France. The initiative gathers:

- Close to **400 volunteer obstetricians and midwives** trained in best practices
- **Five maternity clinics** accredited for cord blood collection
- Over **13,000 units collected** since 2010
- Over **100 transplant patients** worldwide
- Over **1,500 units made available** to researchers each year for the development of new treatments



Each year, the Générale de Santé Foundation awards the International Prize for Research in Cell Therapy and Regenerative Medicine. This prize rewards scientific excellence in the field of tissue regeneration.

This Prize is organised in partnership with the French Academy of Sciences, under the patronage of the French Ministry of Education and Research.



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