

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY DONORS

Does the donation prevent the use of late clamping?

It is important to stress that the well-being of the child and mother is always a priority. While late clamping can reduce the amount of blood collected and thus diminish the chances that the product will be stored and used, this practice is not an obstacle to donating. In fact, in many cases, the amount of cord blood is greater than originally thought. Consequently, even if clamping is done later, the donation may still be enough to qualify and be banked.

Why donate my cord blood?

Cord blood is rich in stem cells that are especially valuable in the treatment of many diseases, including leukemia and medullary aplasia. By agreeing to donate your cord blood, you are offering hope to a patient – and their family – who have been eagerly awaiting a stem cell transplant.

What are the risks associated with donation?

There are none. Neither for you nor your baby. You should know that your baby's well-being will always takes precedence over the cord blood donation. Once your baby has everything he or she needs and is safely in your arms, the delivery doctor will carefully collect the cord blood, which would otherwise be discarded.

Does this change my birth plan?

Absolutely not! Since the cord blood is taken by your delivery doctor, to the surprise of the vast majority of mothers, they barely notice the process at all. That said, we encourage you to add your intention to donate your cord blood to your birth plan and, of course, to inform your doctor.

Who collects the blood?

Your delivery doctor carefully collects the surplus blood remaining in the umbilical cord during the birth.

Is it safe for the mother and baby?

Yes. Cord blood donation is completely safe for both mother and child. In addition, your baby will always be the first priority; the donation remains secondary.

How long does it take?

Cord blood donation usually takes 3 to 5 minutes. It may seem long now, but once your baby is in your arms, the time will pass before you notice it.

Can I change my mind?

Yes, at any time. This decision is completely up to you.

Where does my donation go?

Once collected, the cord blood is sent to Héma-Québec's laboratories. If it meets all the standards, it is frozen and stored at Héma-Québec's Public Cord Blood Bank in the hope that a compatible recipient awaiting a transplant can benefit from it. When frozen, cord blood has a lifespan of more than 15 years.

Will my donation be used for research purposes?

Only if your donation does not qualify to be stored in the Public Bank and only if you have consented beforehand to have it used for research purposes. Without your consent, the cord blood collected for donation will be destroyed.

Are there risks that this sample will be used for other purposes, such as cloning?

No. Cord blood donation is regulated by standards (CSA and NetCord-FACT) and must meet Health Canada requirements, from collection to distribution for transplantation. As well, under the Access to Information Act, you can access your file at any time. You can also decide to have your donation destroyed at any time.