STUDY CONFIRMS THAT THIRD TRIMESTER AMNIOTIC FLUID IS A RELIABLE SOURCE OF STEM CELLS FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE AND STEM CELL BANKING

MEDFORD, Mass., (February 15, 2011) -- In a study that was presented at the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine's annual meeting in San Francisco, Biocell Center, the leader in amniotic fluid banking, together with the group of collaborators, confirmed that amniotic fluid collected during third trimester of pregnancy is a reliable source of stem cells for regenerative medicine and stem cell banking.

Amniotic fluid has emerged as one of the most attractive sources of mesenchymal stem cells with broad utility for stem cell therapy development. The stem cells contained in amniotic fluid are multifunctional and can grow into many different organs and tissues. Research shows that these stem cells could be used to repair cartilage in the knee, heal wounds or grow heart valves. There are 160 human clinical trials around the world evaluating cells similar to the ones found in amniotic fluid, and researchers predict innovations to continue.

"Amniotic fluid banking is the latest advance in stem cell preservation. Research with these stem cells is leading to significant medical discoveries, and the only way to take advantage is to plan ahead and preserve now - says Dr. Kate Torchilin, PhD, CEO of Biocell Center, - And a little bit of fluid can be easily collected during prenatal tests throughout pregnancy."

The study confirms that amniotic fluid collected during third trimester contains mesenchymal stem cells that are similar to younger amniotic fluid cells collected earlier in pregnancy, and potentially enables many more pregnant women to save amniotic fluid.

Amniotic fluid preservation has been widely available in Europe for years, and is rapidly gaining traction in the US. Families are banking amniotic fluid now, from Hawaii to Massachusetts in order to give their child as a many options as possible for the future.

"I recommend that moms undergoing certain prenatal tests, such as amniocentesis, in the second or third trimester discuss saving this fluid with their doctor as soon as they know they will be having an amnio," says Dr. Lucy Bayer, the chief Maternal Fetal Medicine Doctor at St. Elizabeth Hospital and one of the investigators for the study, - "And I am also very excited about these findings, as they affirm amniotic fluid as an excellent source of cells for tissue regeneration."

The study comes out just 2 weeks after the first national Amniotic Fluid Awareness Day that educated expecting families about the benefits of amniotic fluid beyond pregnancy.

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For more information about Amniotic Fluid Awareness day or amniotic fluid banking, please visit http://www.biocellcenter.com or call 1-866-246-2720.

About Amniotic Fluid Stem Cells

During pregnancy, the growing baby is surrounded by amniotic fluid, a substance that is similar to water. Amniotic fluid contains fetal cells that are normally shed during growth, and other chemicals and substances. Amniotic fluid can provide important information about baby's health before birth. Amniotic fluid also contains stem cells, known as mesenchymal stem cells. Recent studies have shown that amniotic fluid is one of the richest, natural sources of such stem cells. Mesenchymal stem cells can differentiate into variety of cell types, including bone, fat, kidney, brain, muscle and liver, and are actively studied by medical researchers for the regenerative medical applications.

About Biocell Center

Biocell Center, the leader in amniotic fluid preservation, was founded by internationally renowned doctors and scientists with decades of experience in prenatal testing and stem cells. Biocell Center is part of an international group of companies that offer amniotic fluid cell cryopreservation services worldwide. For years, Biocell Center has been conveniently and safely preserving amniotic fluid for pregnant women in Europe. The company opened its U.S. headquarters in Boston, Mass. in 2009, and is the first private amniotic fluid cell bank in the U.S. Biocell Center is an active participant in medical collaborations and scientific discussions in the area of amniotic fluid stem cells and their potential use in regenerative medicine.