

Today Marks First National Amniotic Fluid Awareness Day

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While most women understand that amniotic fluid helps nourish and protect a growing baby in the womb, many are unaware of its benefits beyond pregnancy. Today's launch of the very first National Amniotic Fluid Awareness Day aims to educate parents-to-be on the benefits involved in banking amniotic fluid during a pregnancy, according to Biocell Center, the leader in amniotic fluid preservation. While taking this precaution will cost you upwards of \$1,000, research indicates that equipping a child with this option could very well protect him for life, explains Kate Torchilin, CEO of the center.

"The technology to preserve amniotic fluid did not exist until relatively recently so, for decades, doctors and labs have discarded what has proven to be one of the richest, natural sources of mesenchymal stem cells," says Torchilin. "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."

When collected and stored during a pregnancy (it's done as part of an amniocentesis), research suggests amniotic fluid could eventually solve a great deal of medical issues that can arise during the course of that child's life and do things like as help repair cartilage, heal wounds or grow heart valves. Because amniotic fluid stem cells are a perfect match for a child, the organs and tissues that can be grown from these cells will always be accepted by his body.

"It is easy and safe to collect amniotic fluid throughout the entire pregnancy, as early as the second trimester, because a little bit of it is already routinely collected during some prenatal tests", says Torchilin. "A small amount – just one to a few teaspoonfuls – of fluid can be then set aside for preservation, without any change to the prenatal test itself."

"Decisions about prenatal testing and stem cell banking can be overwhelming, so it is important for women who are pregnant or trying to conceive to learn about all their options and be empowered to make the right decision for themselves and their family's needs," said Elizabeth Battaglino Cahill, RN, Executive Director of HealthyWomen, the leader in independent health information for women. "We hope that stem cell banking becomes a routine consideration during pregnancy planning and that women become educated early on."

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

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