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Organ transplant alternative

From the Newspaper | [Letters](#) |

28th March, 2012

THIS is with reference to Dr Murlidhar's letter 'Organ donation and Transplantation' (March 20) which correctly identifies that non – availability of organs results in high mortality rate.

However, along with spreading awareness about organ donation after death, alternate avenues should be explored too.

A collaborative study conducted by a group of Spanish scientists from the University of Granada and Leon has concluded that cells derived from the blood found in the human umbilical cord (the connecting cord which needs to be severed at the time of birth) can be used to treat liver disease, such as hepatitis besides other diseases and blood – related issues.

The blood in the umbilical cord is rich in stem cells (cells having the capability to transform into various human cell types and tissues according to the patient's need),

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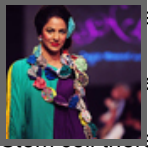
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an opportunity, once in life, to be painlessly collected and stored during
as an 'insurance policy' for a child, and in many cases for close family
en struck by a debilitating disease.

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Showing 3012 marrows applying bone marrow or umbilical cord cells, is considered to be an effective alternative for liver transplantation in treating irreversible liver dysfunction and also for managing other chronic hepatic diseases.

Something that was once considered a medical waste, i.e. the mother's placenta and umbilical cord, is now a precious resource that many people choose to store for their family's health in the future.

This is now a preferred preventive – cum – curative system of medical therapy in European and American countries.

I think it is important that more people should be aware of the value of banking these cells and at least understand all the possibilities for treatment in the future, so that they can make an informed decision on the benefits of storing umbilical cord blood and cord tissue.

HAFSA TAHA DOSSAL

Karachi



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