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First born baby girls provide more samples of cord blood stems

By Asma Ali Zain (Our staff reporter)

3 February 2008

DUBAI — First born baby girls of young mothers provide more samples of cord blood stems as compared to boys, an expert said yesterday.

Talking about a study carried out on 50 cord blood samples of newborns in New Castle, UK, in 2007 and published in Science Direct, Dr Nico Forraz, Senior Research Associate, New Castle University and Director ConoWorld Ltd, said the age of the parents, the number of children they have and the gender of the baby affects the quality of stem cells derived from cord blood at the time of birth for storage.

Dr Forraz, who was part of the research team, was speaking to Khaleej Times on the sidelines of the recent Arab Health Exhibition and Congress that was held in Dubai.

Citing the results and the correlations derived from the study, Dr Forraz said, "The study titled 'Cord blood revelations' revealed interesting facts about the number and quality of cells obtained due to change in vital statistics of people."

"It was also noted that the birth weight also affected the number of collectible cells. If the baby is bigger, the cells are closely clustered," he said.

He also said that the age of the mother at delivery also affected the number. "If the mother is older and the child is not her first, then the number of cells available is lesser as compared to a younger mother delivering her first baby," he explained.

Likewise, the gestational stage also played a major role in the clustering of cells, he added.

Dr Forraz and Colin McGuckin, Professor of Regenerative Medicine, Newcastle Centre for Cord Blood, University of Newcastle, UK created the first world's first artificial liver from stem cells in a breakthrough in 2006.

Described as a 'Eureka moment' by the Newcastle University researchers, the tissue was created from blood taken from babies' umbilical cords just a few minutes after birth.

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