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## Umbilical Cord Stem Cells Slow Down Alzheimer's Progression in Mice

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Scientists have found that targeted immune suppression using stem cells derived from human umbilical cord blood may reduce the progression of Alzheimer's disease, according to a new study published in the March issue of Stem Cells and Development.

For the study, researchers had administered a series of low-dose infusions of umbilical cord blood cells into mice with abnormalities mimicking Alzheimer's disease, according to a Mar. 27 news release by Cryo-Cell International, Inc., which funded the study. Alzheimer's disease is a progressive and incurable brain disease that affects more than five million people in the United States alone.

According to the organization's announcement, researchers found that the two main markers of Alzheimer's progression in the brain were reduced as a result of the infusions – amyloid-beta proteins by 62 percent and cerebral amyloid angiopathy by 86 percent.

"The scientific community has only skimmed the surface in uncovering the many potential therapeutic uses for cord blood stem cells, and this new research in Alzheimer's disease may pave the way for discoveries around the use of these cells for a host of neurodegenerative and other chronic conditions," stated Mercedes Walton, chairman and CEO of Cryo-Cell International.

He said the company – one of the nation's largest and most established family cord blood banks – would continue exploring the "potential of non- controversial stem cells."

The use and research of stem cells derived from umbilical cord blood has been strongly encouraged by conservative groups who decry embryonic stem cell research as unethical.

"The use of umbilical cord blood is more humane than the use of embryos for two reasons," wrote Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse, a senior fellow in economics at the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty, in a column last year.

"First, no human life has to be destroyed to produce the umbilical cord blood," she stated. "Second, the use of umbilical cord blood will undoubtedly be less costly than the use of embryonic stem cells. The supply of umbilical cords is pretty much unlimited."

Conservative and pro-life groups also praised hailed the success of the technique back in 2004 when scientists showed that it could be used to treat a South Korean woman who was paralyzed for 20 years. She was able to walk again after scientists used adult stem cells derived from umbilical cord blood to repair her damaged spine.

Dr. Janice Shaw Crouse, senior fellow of the Concerned Women for America's Beverly LaHaye Institute, had called the breakthrough in 2004 "another instance of the miracles we are seeing from the use of legitimate adult and umbilical-cord stem-cell therapy."

According to Cryo-Cell, stem cells found in cord blood have been proven to treat more than 70 life-threatening illnesses, including leukemia, neuroblastoma, ischemic brain injury and Type 1 diabetes. Cord blood stem cells have also been used in more than 7,000 transplants since the first successful transplant in 1988.

The latest study was conducted by researchers from the University of South Florida and Saneron CCEL Therapeutics, Inc.

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