

# Commonly Asked Questions on Cord Blood Donations by Muslims

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## 1. Can a Muslim be a cord blood donor?

The Fatwa Committee of MUIS has discussed and decided that blood transplant from one person to another is permissible with some conditions:

- a. There is a need for the blood transplant.
- b. It is assured by a qualified doctor that the blood transplant does not cause harm to the donor and in fact provides cure and eases the pain and suffering of the patient.
- c. The transplant must not involve any form of trading or costs, because the blood of a person is sacred hence trading of any part of it is prohibited.

Cord blood donation therefore is permissible in Islam as it fulfills the conditions stated by the fatwa.

A Muslim can donate his/her cord blood as the blood contain cells vital to replace the blood cells in a person who has leukemia, bone marrow failure or certain rare inherited diseases. The collection process does not interfere in the birth process and therefore does not endanger both mother and child.

Since the benefit of cord blood donation is prevalent while there is no harm involved, it is therefore allowed in Islam. In fact, it is encouraged as it helps alleviate other people's sufferings and save lives, in line with the Quranic injunction which means "... whomever saves one life, then it is as though he has saved the whole of humanity." (Al-Maidah:32)

## 2. Can a Muslim cord blood be transplanted to a non-Muslim patient and vice versa?

Similar to the cases in kidney donation and transplantation, Muslims may donate cord blood to and receive from non-Muslims. This is because when it comes to saving lives, Islam does not differentiate between Muslims and non-Muslims as long as they are living in harmony with each other. Respect to human beings extends to Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

**3. In Islam, must the placenta be buried after the birth of the baby?**

While some scholars are of the opinion that it is encouraged to bury the placenta, it is not compulsory.

For those who wish to bury it, it should be done properly and safely. It is also permissible to leave it at the hospital.

**4. If the placenta is to be buried, is it acceptable after the cord blood is drained out?**

As the blood is permissible to be donated, it is acceptable to bury the placenta after the blood is drained from it.

**5. There are concerns that cord blood donors will marry the recipient who will receive his/her donated cord blood unit? How will this affect the donor?**

Organ and blood transplantation, including cord blood donation, does not bring about kinship, or familial ties between donor and donee. Therefore, marrying one's donor or donee or their family members is permissible and does not affect them in any way.

**6. The fatwa (Islamic ruling) mentioned that blood cannot be traded. If the Singapore Cord Blood Bank receives payment for the cord blood that they store, is that not akin to selling the blood?**

What is prohibited is the trading of the cord blood, where the recipient pays a specific monetary or other benefit to the person who provides the blood.

In the case of third party organisations, if the remuneration that they receive is for the services related to the collection, storage and delivery of the cord blood, then it does not fall under the definition of trading that is prohibited.

It is important for donors to seek thorough explanation from the agencies or organisations through which they are donating their blood, to ensure that they make informed decisions.