

Amazing first: leukemia patient completely cured with cord blood stem cells

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BERLIN, November 26, 2010 (LifeSiteNews.com) - Doctors associated with the German umbilical cord blood bank Vita 34 say that they have cured a child's leukemia completely using an infusion of stem cells from umbilical cord blood.

The procedure was reportedly performed in 2005 on a four-year-old girl whose chemotherapy treatment had failed and who had a prognosis of only three months to live. The procedure was possible because the parents had decided to preserve their child's umbilical cord blood at the time of birth.

After continuous monitoring of the child for five years now, with no sign of leukemia cells in her blood, doctors say that they have confirmed that the treatment worked.

"Seventy-five months have passed and we can speak of a cure with certainty," said Eberhard Lampeter of Vita 34.

According to the Chilean newspaper La Tercera, this is the first case in the world of a child cured of leukemia by her own stem cells. In most cases the child's umbilical cord blood is not available, and the stem cells of close family members must be used.

The new treatment is the latest in a long string of hundreds of successes in the science of stem cell treatments that use mature cells rather than embryonic stem cells. Embryonic stem cell treatments, which destroy a human life, have never been proven effective in any medical treatment to date. Treatments with mature stem cells do not cause harm to the donor of the cells.

Stem cell pioneer Dr. Colin McGuckin recently told LifeSiteNews that, despite amazing success with umbilical cord blood treatments, it remains difficult to obtain funding for research because of the "cult of celebrity" in science, which rewards controversial research over research that is truly effective in saving lives.

"People aren't talking about cord blood because it's not controversial," McGuckin told LSN. "Consequently, it does not make headlines and therefore researchers who want to use the cells from cord blood do not receive funding."