

Witnessing the Power of Cord Blood

Alia Scherr has witnessed the life-saving impact of cord blood. While working at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC, she comforted children suffering from illnesses such as leukemia, Hodgkin's lymphoma, and congenital heart disease. Some children were lucky enough to benefit from a cord blood transplant. She watched as this vital resource transformed lives. It was during this time she decided that if she ever had children, she wouldn't think twice about donating cord blood.



As a Child Life Assistant at Children's, Alia became well acquainted with many ailing children and their families. One boy in particular strongly impacted her decision to donate cord blood.

To the left: At birth, Molly Scherr helped provide someone a second chance at life through her donation of cord blood.

Ryder McDermitt suffered from acute myeloid leukemia at 18 months of age, but is now cancer-free thanks to an anonymous little girl whose mother donated her cord blood. Alia marveled at Ryder's recovery, and wondered why all mothers didn't take this simple step to help those in need.

Alia had the opportunity to make a difference with the arrival of her daughter, Molly Elizabeth, on November 11, 2009. Weighing 8 lbs., 14 oz., she was a healthy baby. Alia and Molly were the first cord blood donors at St. Clair Hospital in Pittsburgh.

Although Alia will never know the individual who may benefit from Molly's cord blood, she is at ease knowing "something so small can be so large for so many families."

Saving a life has never been easier. According to Alia, the process for donating cord blood was so simple through The Dan Berger Cord Blood Program. She was sent a collection kit a few weeks before she delivered, and in the meantime, filled out the accompanying paper work. When her delivery day arrived, she was ready to go with her collection kit in hand.

"I urge every pregnant woman to take a few minutes to make the call to the Dan Berger Cord Blood Program," said Alia.

Not everyone has the pleasure of knowing a brave boy like Ryder, but you may have the potential to share a lifeline to give someone a second chance at life.

To find out more about your cord blood options, visit www.danbergercordblood.com or consult with your physician. Please consider signing up for The Dan Berger Cord Blood Program during your second trimester of pregnancy. If you want an information kit regarding your cord blood options, please contact the cord blood manager, Mary Wiegel, at mwiegel@itxm.org or 412-209-7479, or 412-327-6025.