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## LifeSiteNews.com

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### Success Stories with Adult Stem Cells Coming in Almost Too Fast to Track

January 20, 2005 (LifeSiteNews.com) - Success stories about adult stem cell treatments are coming in so fast that LifeSiteNews.com, one of the few newswire services to follow the issue closely, is having trouble keeping up. While most disease research organizations, such as Juvenile Diabetes, Multiple Sclerosis and the Canadian Cancer Society, continue to promote the use of living embryonic human beings for experimentation, the only success stories to date have all come from the use of adult stem cells.

Adult stem cells are distinguished from those derived from embryos, and do not necessarily mean only those from adult patients. Adult stem cells are being found in abundance in blood taken from the umbilical cord for example. Three stories have appeared only today that show where the real hope lies in stem cell research.

A young American woman, Erica Nader, injured in a car accident and paralysed from the upper arms down, has been treated for a spinal cord injury using stem cells taken from her nose and implanted in the spinal cord at the site of the injury. The procedure, which is performed nowhere else in the world was performed by a team of surgeons in Portugal at Lisbon's Egas Moniz Hospital. "After three years, magnetic imaging resonance tests (MRI's) show that the cells indeed promote the development of new blood cells and synapses, or connections between nerve cells," says Dr. Carlos Lima, chief of the Lisbon team.

Nader is recovering slowly but steadily. She was paralyzed from her biceps down and three years ago had no finger movements. Now, she can do exercises on a floor mat and walk with leg braces on a treadmill.

Treating children suffering from blood disorders such as leukemia with adult stem cells is common, but treatment for adults is difficult because of the scarcity of cells that can be taken from an adult. Today the American Society of Hematology reports that the problem is being overcome by a new technique that combines two cord blood units from different donors for transplantation into adult or adolescent leukemia patients. Cord blood is more tolerant of differences between patient and donor, making it possible to perform cord blood transplants without an exact match.

"With this new technique of increasing the dose by combining two units, this procedure could be made available to thousands more patients and has the potential to save many lives," said one of the authors of the University of Minnesota study.

Researchers at the Massachusetts General Hospital have found that the spleen may be a source of potential adult stem cells that contain a protein called Hox11, which is associated with embryonic development and limb regeneration. Previously it was believed that the protein was

only found in embryos. The spleen was also found to contain stem cells that were involved in the production of insulin. The new discovery, says Dr. Denise Faustman, director of the hospital's Immunobiology Laboratory, could mean that "There may be a previously undiscovered pocket of primitive stem cells in the spleen that are important for healing several types of damage or injury."

Paraplegic improving after stem-cell implant

<http://www.indystar.com/articles/5/209449-5235-047...>

Cord Blood Transplantation Now a Viable Option for Adult Leukemia Patients

<http://releases.usnewswire.com/GetRelease.asp?id=4...>

Spleen Surprise Source of Stem Cells

<http://www.forbes.com/lifestyle/health/feeds/hscou...>

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