

## LifeCell brings Menstrual Blood stem cell banking to India

*~ Actress Lisa Ray unveils this revolutionary service named 'LifeCell Femme' ~*

**Mumbai, March 8, 2011:** Marking the 100<sup>th</sup> International Women's Day celebration as a yet another remarkable milestone, LifeCell International, pioneers in stem cell banking, today launched **LifeCell Femme**-Menstrual blood stem cell banking service in India. Actress & Model Lisa Ray unveiled this innovative service at the launch function at Mumbai.

LifeCell is the first and only company offering menstrual blood stem cell banking in India and the launch of this break-through technology reinstates LifeCell's pioneering and leadership positioning in the industry. Menstrual blood banking has been pioneered by Cryo-Cell International, USA who are the technology partners of LifeCell and have been offering this service in other countries under the brand C'elle.

Until now, menstrual blood has been discarded as unsanitary waste. However, recent research demonstrates that the menstrual blood contains large number of self-renewing stem cells. These cells multiply rapidly and can differentiate into many other types of cells such as neural, cardiac, bone, fat, cartilage and possibly others; demonstrating great potential for cell therapy.

Every month during a woman's menstrual period the uterine lining – Endometrium is shed along with the extra blood and tissues. This lining of the uterus contains a large number of mesenchymal stem cells and several thousand fold high concentration of stem cell growth factors. These cells from the endometrium are unique because they have many properties and characteristics similar to both bone marrow and embryonic stem cells.

The goal of mesenchymal cell therapy is to treat diseases of non-hematopoietic tissues in an analogous fashion to treating leukemia with hematopoietic stem cell transplantation. Menstrual stem cells have the potential to differentiate into possibly every other cell type in the human body. Although menstrual stem cell technology has not yet been utilized to date in human therapies, the collective body of ongoing research may potentially change the types of therapies used to diagnose or treat a host of significant medical conditions in the future affecting hundreds of millions worldwide like Alzheimer's Disease, Atherosclerosis, Diabetes, Heart Disease, Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Parkinson's Disease, Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis and many others.

Understanding the potential of these stem cells LifeCell brings the innovative concept of menstrual blood stem cell banking wherein these vital stem cells can be preserved for future therapeutic usage when needed. The menstrual blood derived mesenchymal stem cells also potentially overcome the problem of immune rejection in female patients, as they could use their own stem cells for therapies. Importantly these menstrual blood stem cells are can be easily collected, processed and harvested in an affordable, painless and non-invasive manner.

Speaking on the occasion, **Mr. Mayur Abhaya, Executive Director, LifeCell International** said, “After our success of pioneering the concept of umbilical cord stem cell banking in the country, we are proud to introduce LifeCell Femme menstrual blood stem cell banking. In India, there is lot of myths and taboo associated with menstrual blood and our biggest challenge will be to get people to accept & overcome such traditional setbacks and myths.

Considering the strong scientific foundation of this service and impressive clinical progress of mesenchymal stem cell research and therapy, we believe that this service will appeal to thousands of women in the country who desire to secure their future health. Our wide spread network covering over 70 cities will help us offer our new service to every important market in India. With the introduction of this new service we are a step closer to meeting our objective of bringing in the latest potential preventive and proactive healthcare solutions to the country”

Present at the occasion **Actress & Model Lisa Ray** said “I am delighted to launch LifeCell Femme and I congratulate LifeCell for bringing this breakthrough stem cell technology to India. Having undergone stem cell transplantation myself and benefitted from stem cells to battle blood cancer, I stand here as a live testimony of stem cells which has been a new ray of life for many. We should welcome this promising technology with open minds as it could help us conquer life threatening diseases, especially when all other hopes of treatment are given up”

“Stem cell technology is the future of medicine. Experiments performed at the Keio University school of medicine have succeeded in growing sheets of heart muscle from connective tissue cells harvested from menstrual blood When it comes to growing heart muscle, however, the connective tissue cells in menstrual blood have a success rate 100 times higher than the 0.2 - 0.3 percent for stem cells taken from human bone marrow” said **Dr Ajit Kumar, Chief Scientific Officer, LifeCell International.**

#### **Advantages of Menstrual Blood Stem Cells**

- **Higher Potential** compared to similar cells from the bone marrow, and hence can potentially be used across a wider range of applications
- **Higher proliferative properties** compared to similar cells from bone marrow. Allows them to multiply for longer duration without damages to DNA and hence larger numbers can be obtained on expansion from small initial numbers
- **Multiple Dosages** are possible by obtaining unlimited numbers of purified mesenchymal stem cells for therapeutic use for more than once
- **Painless and harmless** procedure allowing simple, easy & convenient collection of menstrual blood
- **High Patient safety** since these cells are well tolerated, with no patient deaths, no toxicity or any adverse side effects reported thus holding the potential for a large-scale clinical use

LifeCell Femme is the first and only menstrual blood stem cell banking service in India. The collection process for menstrual blood is painless and hassle free. The collection can be done at the privacy and convenience of home using a ‘Menstrual Cup’ - a conical shaped medical grade silicon cup which can collect up to 30 ml of menstrual blood. The menstrual cup is a reusable product, approved by US FDA and is used as an alternative to sanitary napkin or tampon globally.

Once collected the menstrual blood stem cells are dispatched to LifeCell's state of the art laboratory facility at Chennai for processing. After processing the stem cells are harvested and the menstrual stem cells are frozen in liquid nitrogen storage container for cryogenic preservation at sub-zero minus 196 degree centigrade. This procedure will enable the stem cells to retain its potency and viability for indefinite period of time. The stored sample can be retrieved at any point of time with no additional cost.

LifeCell Femme will be available at a cost of just Rs.29,900 during the first year under the Annual storage plan. The customer needs to pay only an annual storage fee of Rs.1,500 for every subsequent year for as many years as they desire to preserve their menstrual blood stem cells. One-time payment options are also available and this can be subscribed with a low EMI of just Rs.4,200 per month for 24 months for storage of stem cells up to the age of 60 without any additional interim costs.

### ***How much does Menstrual Blood stem cell banking cost***

- ***Preservation price starts at Rs.29,900***
- ***Annual storage fee is just Rs.1,500***
- ***One-time payment plans for preservation up to age of 60 available***
- ***One-time payment available at easy EMI schemes as low as Rs.4,200 for 24 months***

**Reach LifeCell @ Toll free: 1800-103-5353 | Helpline: +91 96771 12233 | SMS 'LIFECCELL' to 53456**  
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**About LifeCell International Pvt. Ltd:** LifeCell is India's largest and most accredited stem cell bank with over 30,000 customers since inception in 2004, and has over 75 centers across India and abroad. LifeCell facilitates the cryogenic preservation of stem cells in technological collaboration with Cryo-Cell International Inc, USA - the world's first stem cell bank with more nearly 2 decades of expertise in stem cell banking. LifeCell is the first stem cell bank in India to be accredited by AABB (American Association of Blood Banks) and College of American Pathologists (CAP) for adopting their international standards. LifeCell is also uniquely positioned as comprehensive stem cells solutions provider with a complete spectrum of services in stem cells through multi-service stem cell banking, R&D, clinical trials and stem cell therapy.

#### **Contacts for media enquiries and further information**

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