

LifeCell International extends its Mother and Child Healthcare franchise by offering Prenatal Screening services

LifeCell today announced its foray into offering comprehensive prenatal screening test services to its clients under the 'BabyShield' program. Prenatal testing is done to check for medical conditions in a fetus or embryo in early stages of pregnancy as per prescribed guidelines.

Already LifeCell BabyShield is the market leader in the country in Newborn Screening Test - a test done shortly after birth to screen for a list of conditions that are treatable, but not clinically evident in the newborn period.

Globally these two screening tests comprise the largest genetic screening programs with over 60 countries making it mandatory as part of their national health programs. India has the largest number of babies born with chromosomal disorders in the world, making it even more critical to detect any abnormalities at an early stage through prenatal screening tests. Its entry into Prenatal Testing services is powered by LifeCell International acquiring a controlling stake in Fetomed Laboratories, a leading provider of prenatal screening services and foetal medicine, pursuant to the share subscription and purchase agreement signed last week.

In its ongoing effort to bring new and improved range of investigations and superior technologies for mother and child healthcare, LifeCell plans to introduce the Quantitative fluorescent polymerase chain reaction (QFPCR) tests as a substitute to the Fluorescence in situ hybridization (FISH) technique. QFPCR is a globally accepted and reliable method to detect trisomies with a high-throughput, faster reporting, covers more than 99% of the clinically relevant aneuploidies and very low failure rates.

In addition, LifeCell also plans to promote Non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT) for biochemical screening test result showing a high risk of Down syndrome, as it can substantially reduce the number of miscarriages occurring due to invasive diagnostic testing.

Fetomed Laboratories: Founded in 2013 by Dr. Sreedhar Mayavan, M.Sc., PhD and Ashiya Fathima, Fetomed Laboratories is a Chennai based lab and is a well recognised provider of the latest prenatal screening tests, prenatal diagnostics, foetal medicine and molecular genetics. Fetomed's offering include First trimester testing (FTS), Second trimester testing (STS), Quadruple screening, FISH, Karyotyping and other routine prenatal tests.

LifeCell International: Established in 2004, LifeCell is India's first and largest private stem cell bank, enjoying the trust of over 150,000 parents who have banked their children's stem cells with the Company. Further, LifeCell is also a provider of new born screening (NBS) through its well-recognized 'BabyShield' preventive diagnostics program. LifeCell is an investee of Helion Venture Partners since February 2013.