

DCGI approves stem cell-based therapy trial for COVID-19 pneumonia treatment

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New therapy derived from mesenchymal stem cells of the umbilical cord tissue set to treat patients suffering from COVID-19 pneumonia and acute respiratory distress

LifeCell's latest therapy called Mesocel has received approval for a clinical trial on COVID-19 pneumonia and acute respiratory distress from the Biological Division of the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).

Derived from Mesenchymal Stem Cells (MSCs) obtained from donated umbilical cord tissue, Mesocel is set to treat patients suffering from life-threatening COVID-19 pneumonia and acute respiratory distress.

The clinical trial, to be conducted in two phases, will evaluate the safety and efficacy of Mesocel for the treatment of patients with moderate to severe COVID-19.

The therapy involves 100 million + expanded MSCs obtained from donated umbilical cord tissue and are intravenously infused into patients in two intravenous doses. The therapy can be undertaken without the need for immune matching between donor and patient.

LifeCell has set up a manufacturing facility at its Chennai campus that will further bolster its biologics manufacturing capabilities. Equipped with multiple bioreactors of different sizes, the facility ensures an uninterrupted supply of MSCs for timely and affordable treatment by using the bio-reactors to expand the cells in a sterile environment, thereby providing significant advantages from a cost and quality-control perspective.