



MEDICAL DEVICES

Tissue graft derived from placenta for orthopedic surgery, wound repair could accelerate rehab

By STEPHANIE BAUM

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One of the biggest challenges in recovering from surgery, particularly on a tendon, is the amount of time patients take to recover. One reason is because the adhesions that are left from the procedure. A biotechnology startup has developed a tissue graft derived from living human donors to replace the connective tissue that forms a protective covering for tendons and the spine that could help reduce the amount of time it takes to recover from these procedures.

[AFcell Medical](#) has raised \$2.23 million towards a \$10 million financing round to build its sales and marketing division. It is also relocating its offices in Wayne to West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania.

“This will be a very busy year,” CEO Robin Young told MedCity News in a phone interview. “Business has been ramping up dramatically. We are tripling the size of our staff as we shift from an engineering firm to a sales and marketing firm.

Its AmnioClear tissue graft uses the inner lining of the placenta recovered from human donors in cesarean section births. The reason is because it is the largest continuous sheet of the amniotic membrane available, according to CEO Robin

Young. He says it's the first human allograft membrane transplant for surgical use. In tendon surgery, one challenge going through recovery is restoring proper movement to the area because the gliding function provided by the tendon's protective covering or fascia is interrupted by the adhesions left from the surgery. Young says that using tissue from living human donors does a better job of restoring that movement than synthetic versions of the fascia that have dominated the market.



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The biomaterial technology fits under the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration's classification for allograft transplants](#) that covers transplanted tissue. The tissue is tested by CLIA-certified labs and is processed by the [Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation](#).

In the 5,000 patients that the company's graft has been used, the

most common procedures have been for laminectomies, procedures on Achilles tendons, as well as for wound repair for conditions like diabetic ulcers, burns and trauma. But the company sees scope for its product in any surgical procedure that involves breaking the fascia covering of blood vessels, nerves and muscles.

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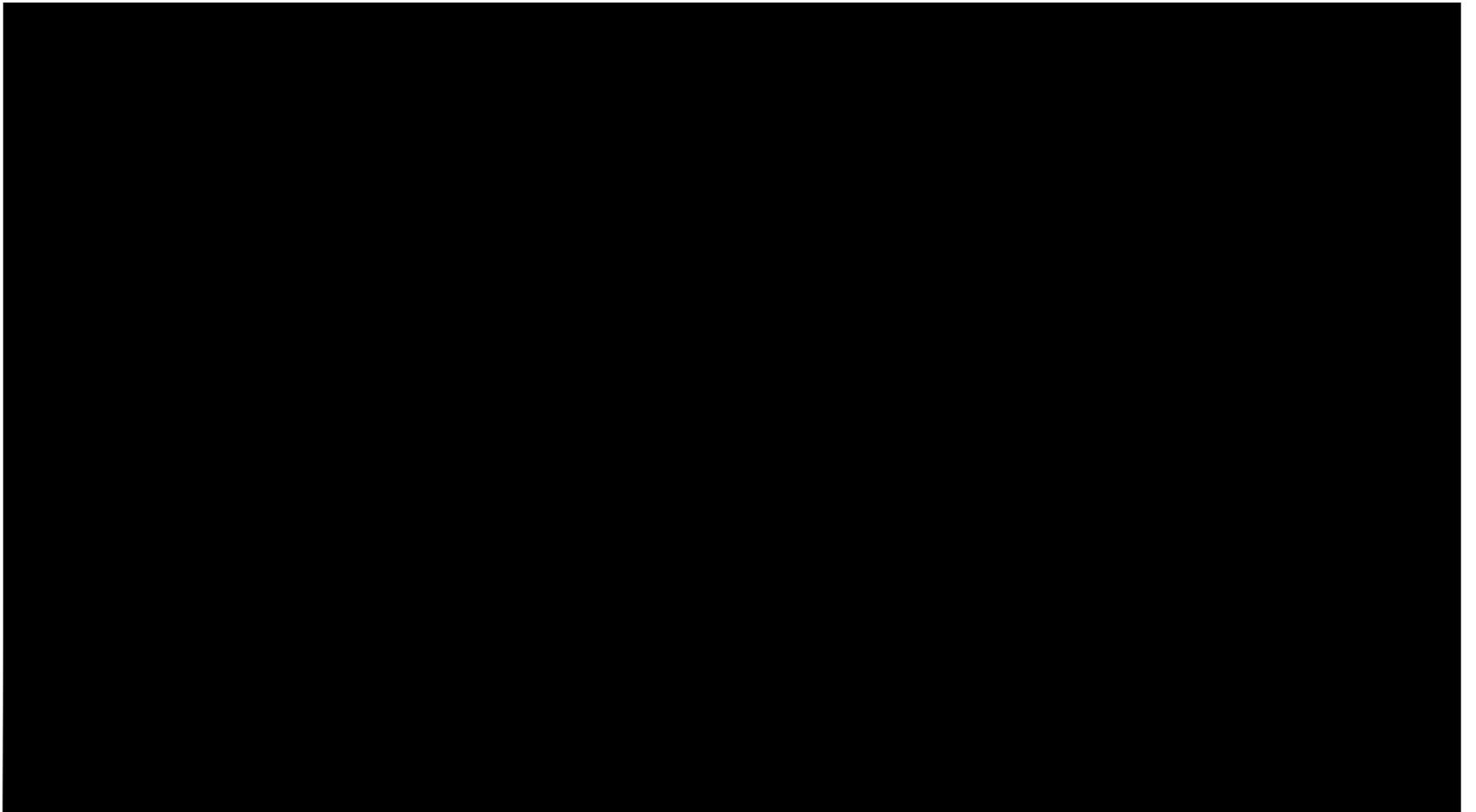


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