

## Umbilical Cord Severance

In nearly all circumstances, I offer you the choice in which way you would like your baby's umbilical cord to be separated from the placenta. The cord is left intact until it is done pulsing almost every time. On rare occasions, I may need to "clamp & cut" very soon after the birth (i.e. if the cord is very short), but fortunately this is a rarity and I believe in offering you lots of options when they are available!

### Standard "Clamp & Cut"

After the placenta is delivered (generally), a clamp is placed on the baby's side of the cord and another clamp is placed on the placenta's side of the cord. A person of your choice uses umbilical scissors to cut in-between the two clamps. Many parents like this choice because it is a quick and joyous moment that is well-known in U.S. culture.

Your birth kit contains a Cetro Cord Ring. It is a small, **latex**, rubber circle that goes over the cord tightly after the cord is cut to keep blood from escaping. If you prefer something other than **latex**, please let me know before your birth so that an alternative may be used. The alternative most likely would be cord tape, a material that is like sterile shoe string.

### Cord Burning

The baby is kept attached to the placenta via the umbilical cord until everyone is settled in a comfortable spot (i.e. in bed), often this will happen an hour or more after the birth. Two tapered candles are used to burn the umbilical cord and thus separate it from the placenta. It is the most sterile way to release the placenta. Some parents like this choice because it can be like a ceremonial event and they describe it as a gentle, slow process. There is a flame involved but we use a low-heat candle and the cord is burned at a point further down the umbilical cord than a standard clamp is placed. There is some evidence that the cord is released sooner with this method.

**If you choose this option, you will need to order your own candles. I recommend two taper candles that are lead-free. You will also need to supply the container in which the wax will drop, a paper plate works well, although there are keepsake boxes for cord burning if you prefer to purchase one.**

[http://www.bigdipperwaxworks.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=product.display&product\\_ID=86&ParentCat=26](http://www.bigdipperwaxworks.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=product.display&product_ID=86&ParentCat=26)

<http://www.cordburning.com/order-a-box.html>

### Lotus Birth

This is the practice of leaving the placenta, baby and cord all intact until they naturally separate. People who choose this option generally wrap the placenta in herbs and believe that it offers the baby the most peaceful transition from womb to the world. **If you choose this option, you will need to order your own herbs or other products involved with lotus birth.**

## Placenta Options

The options for the placenta are endless, these are just a few ideas based off of what many of my clients have chosen.

### Consumption

#### *Encapsulation*

Placenta encapsulation is the most popular way to consume the placenta. The placenta is dehydrated, then powdered, then put into capsules so that the mother can replace the hormones that it produced during pregnancy. The potential benefits that many claim are that of faster healing after birth, increased milk production, decreased anxiety and postpartum depression, and decreased fatigue. Your midwife can do this, or arrange to have another placenta specialist perform it, for \$100 (established client fee).

#### *Tincture*

A placenta tincture has the potential to be of even greater benefit since it uses a piece of raw placenta and an alcohol extracts it's hormone and properties, preserving it. Although, it takes 6-8 weeks for the tincture process and be consumable.

#### *Other edibles*

Smoothies are also a popular option because you can take a small piece of frozen placenta, put it into a smoothie, and reap all of the benefits of the placenta in an unaltered form.

Other edibles include making truffles or baking the placenta into foods.

### Planting

Many families like to "honor" their life giving organ by allowing it to continue to provide life through fertilization by planting under a tree dedicated to their baby.

#### *Celtic tradition*

I learned through a previous client that in celtic tradition, birth months come with specific birth trees. You could decide to plant your baby's birth month tree over the placenta.

### Donation

If available and needed, and with your permission, the midwife can take your placenta to a placenta tour workshop that is generally offered to local community colleges on a quarterly basis.

Another option for donation is to donate to Washington State Search & Rescue, where the placentas are used to train search dogs.

### Safekeeping

Sometimes families don't know what they want to do with the placenta but they don't want it discarded. Your midwife can package it up and prepare it to be frozen so you can decide at a later date. In a standard freezer, the placenta will stay at food grade quality for approximately 6 months. In a deep freezer, the placenta will stay at food grade quality for approximately 12 months.

### Combination

If you want to do more than one thing, it's easy to divide the placenta.

### Medical Waste Removal

This is the most common option for women given birth in the hospital since many women aren't given options. I can also have the placenta taken by a medical waste company who reportedly incinerates the placenta along with other biohazardous waste.