

Lotus Birth/Umbilical Non-Severance: What to Expect

What is a lotus birth?

A lotus birth is the decision to leave your baby's umbilical cord attached after they are born. The umbilical cord remains attached to the placenta until it dries and falls off by itself.

What are the risks of lotus birth?

There are no research studies available on this topic. Therefore we cannot recommend this practice. Once the umbilical cord and placenta are out of the womb, blood will stop circulating and the placenta will be dead tissue. The blood in the placenta could get an infection, and infect your baby.

What are the signs that I should seek immediate medical care for?

Seek immediate medical care if your baby:

- Has redness, warmth, swelling at or around the umbilical area
- Has temperature greater than 100.4
- Is feeding poorly, less than this schedule:
 - 24 hours - 48 hours of life: **at least 6-8 feedings** (2 urines & 2 stools)
 - 48 hours - 3 days of life: **at least 8-12 feedings per day** (3 urines & 3 stools)
- Is sleeping more than usual. You have to wake your baby up to feed more than you normally do

When Will My Baby's Umbilical Cord Detach?

It usually detaches after 5-15 days.

How Do I Take Care of the Placenta?

- Keep the placenta next to your baby to avoid unnecessary pulling on the cord.
- Lift, feed and cuddle your baby carefully.
- Dress your baby loosely with clothing that opens at the front.
- There is not a specific way to preserve the placenta that is medically recommended. Some parents choose to leave the placenta open to air and some prepare the placenta with salt or essential oils and some store it a placenta bag.

What If I Decide to Detach the Cord After I Get Home?

Do not do this by yourself. Take your baby to their doctor and they can clamp and cut the cord at the office.

Can My Baby Still Use A Car Seat?

Yes, all babies must travel in a car seat. The attached umbilical cord and placenta should not limit car seat use. If the umbilical cord gets in the way of the buckle, moisten the cord with gauze and water to soften and reshape it to fit under or over the buckle. If you are in a car accident, there is a risk of cord avulsion (the cord tearing away from the body).

When Should I Follow-Up with My Baby's Doctor?

Follow up with your baby's primary care doctor within 1-3 days. See your discharge paper for specific day.

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