



## Pregnancy Pearls

### *Delayed Cord Clamping*

#### **Does it matter when the cord is clamped after baby is born?**

There is evidence that delaying clamping of the cord for a couple of minutes after birth (or until the cord stops pulsating) can have some benefits for babies (presuming baby is well when delivered and does not require any immediate medical attention).

Transfusion of blood from the placenta into baby's circulation increases the number and concentration of red blood cells, reducing the rates of anaemia in newborns. This may be of particular benefit for babies of mothers who have had low iron stores in pregnancy or who are born prematurely.

It makes no difference whether baby is held below the level of the placenta or held on mum's abdomen or chest.

#### **Are there any longer term benefits?**

It has been shown that there are lower levels of iron deficiency in babies who had delayed cord clamping when levels are checked at 3-6 months of age.

#### **Are there any risks to delayed cord clamping?**

In term infants, there is a significantly higher rate of needing phototherapy to treat jaundice caused by the higher number of red blood cells breaking down. This rate increases from 2.7 to 4.4%.

In babies who have struggled with growth restriction in the womb, there is a higher risk of jaundice which will be increased with delayed cord clamping.

#### **Should we decide to delay cord clamping or not?**

This is a decision that is best made on a case by case basis. For babies at a low risk of post-delivery anaemia, the risk of jaundice requiring phototherapy may outweigh the benefits of delayed cord clamping and it is best you discuss this with your Obstetrician.

The above information doesn't take the place of a medical consultation so please seek further advice if your symptoms continue to concern you.

**Contact us to book an appointment**

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