



# **LOTUS BIRTH – “A Revolutionary Innovative advanced birthing practice|”**

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Lotus birth (or umbilical cord nonseverance - UCNS) is the practice of leaving the umbilical cord uncut after childbirth so that the baby is left attached to the placenta until the cord naturally separates at the umbilicus. This usually occurs within 3–10 days after birth.

As of December 2008, no evidence exists to support any medical benefits for the baby. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has warned about the risks of infection as the decomposing placenta tissue becomes a nest for infectious bacteria such as *Staphylococcus*. In one such case a 20-hour old baby whose parents chose UCNS was brought to the hospital in an agonal state, was diagnosed with sepsis and required an antibiotic treatment for 6 weeks.

## **Benefits:**

Practitioners of lotus birth claim the practice to have these benefits:

- ✓ A gentle, less-invasive transition for the baby from womb to the world
- ✓ Increased blood and nourishment from the placenta
- ✓ Decreased injury to the belly button.
- ✓ A spiritual ritual to honor the shared life between baby and placenta.
- ✓ Helpful for emergency birth situation and are waiting for medical attention.
- ✓ Reduce your risk for complications.

- ✓ Stronger immune system.
- ✓ A greater supply of oxygen.
- ✓ A calmer attitude

### **Procedure/ Steps:**

- In the full lotus birth clinical protocol, the umbilical cord, which is attached to the baby's navel and placenta, is not clamped or cut.
- The baby is immediately placed on the mother's belly/chest (depending on the length of the cord) or kept in close proximity to the mother in cases when medically necessary procedures such as resuscitation may be needed.
- In Lotus birth, the placenta is delivered vaginally, often with the maternal informed choice for passive management of third stage of labor, allowing for natural detachment of the placenta within appropriate time allowed for it, with no hormonal injections such as oxytocin) or via cesarean section.
- Following birth, the placenta is simply put in a bowl or quickly wrapped in absorbent toweling and placed near the mother-baby.
- Caregivers step back to allow for undisturbed maternal-child bonding to occur as the primary event for an hour or more.
- It is only after this initial intense bonding period that the placenta is managed by rinsing, drying, applying preservatives, and positioning it in a way that allows for plentiful air circulation and proximity to the baby.
- The placenta, once ejected from the womb, has no circulation and quickly dies; and within 3–10 days postpartum the umbilical cord dries and detaches from the baby's belly.
- The practice requires the mother and baby to be home bound as they wait for the placenta and umbilical cord to dry, decompose, and separate from the baby.

### **Care of placenta after a lotus birth:**

- ✓ Keep the placenta near baby and lift or hold the baby carefully with clean, thoroughly washed hands to reduce the chances of the cord being tugged, which could potentially cause the cord to be pulled out before it's ready to fall off.
- ✓ Dress the baby in loose, comfortable clothing that opens in the front too.
- ✓ Don't attempt to remove the umbilical cord at home by nonmedical person.
- ✓ It should fall off naturally within 3 to 10 days after birth, but in some cases it could take up to 15 days.
- ✓ If parents decide to remove the umbilical cord before it's ready to fall off, call pediatrician.
- ✓ Keep an eye on the placenta and baby for infection or accidental cord tearing.

### **Signs of a possible infection, when immediate medical care needed:**

- ✓ A pus or fluid-filled lump near the umbilical cord area.
- ✓ Red, warm or swollen skin near the umbilical cord area.
- ✓ Cloudy, foul-smelling discharge or blood coming from the umbilical cord or navel area.
- ✓ A fever greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.

- ✓ Irritability, lethargy, trouble feeding or decreased activity.

### Complication:

- Sepsis : Nest for infectious bacteria such as Staphylococcus because after birth, the placenta is a dead organ with stagnant blood and infected placenta can infect the infant.
- The baby risks injury of the cord accidentally being ripped away from their body. This is known as cord avulsion.
- One case study of a full-term baby linked lotus birth with hepatitis in the baby.
- Jaundice / neonatal hyperbilirubinemia.
- Polycythemia
- Death: A baby died 16 hours after birth from sepsis in the setting of a lotus birth, in 2017 at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

### Conclusion:

However, there's not enough research to say how much higher the risk of infection may be with a lotus birth. Lotus birth can also be a spiritual practice to honor the relationship between the infant and its placenta. The World Health Organisation does not support Lotus Birth, instead recommending a delayed cord clamping.

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