

Having delayed umbilical cord clamping when you give birth

Maternity Services

Information for Patients

Produced: March 2026

Review: March 2029

Leaflet number: 1716 Version: 1

Introduction

After birth, your baby's umbilical cord will be clamped and cut. This will separate your baby from the placenta. Studies show that if we wait a few minutes before clamping the cord, it will help your baby. Waiting lets extra blood flow from the placenta into your baby. This is called deferred (or delayed) cord clamping (DCC). The length of time the cord is left unclamped is normally about 1 to 2 minutes. It takes about 2 minutes for the blood flow to your baby to finish.

This leaflet will give you more information about DCC. Talk to your midwife if you want to know more about DCC.

What are the benefits of DCC?

- DCC allows extra blood to move from the placenta to your baby. This increases the amount of iron your baby gets. Iron is needed to help the brain develop. Some studies have shown that higher iron levels may help brain development in older children too.
- DCC helps to keep your baby's blood pressure stable. It helps them when they are born and taking their first breaths.
- DCC also helps babies who are born early (premature). DCC helps them to have better blood flow and more red blood cells. Babies born early are at risk of bleeding into the brain or having problems with their gut. If they have DCC, these risks are lowered.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals.
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

What are the risks of DCC?

DCC is safe and effective. The World Health Organisation recommend it.

There is a small risk of higher jaundice levels. Jaundice is a buildup of a substance called bilirubin. This causes the skin, whites of the eyes and mouth to yellow in babies. This is usually mild and does not need treatment. If your baby does need treatment, we put your baby under blue light (phototherapy).

Before your baby is born

- You will need to think about the length of time taken before the cord is clamped and cut. This can be part of your birth plan.

What will happen after the birth?

- At birth, your baby will be dried and kept warm next to you.
- Your baby will normally be placed on your chest skin-to-skin.
- Your baby will be checked to make sure they are okay.
- The cord will not be clamped right away.
- We will wait at least 1 minute after the birth before we clamp.
- Sometimes your baby needs support with breathing right after the birth. We may be able to do this with the cord intact.
- If your baby is born early (prematurely), the cord will be clamped and cut at 1 minute.

Will any blood tests be taken from the cord?

We may take blood from your baby's cord at birth to:

- find out about your baby's wellbeing during labour
- find those in need of more checks or support.

We can only do this if your baby is born in hospital. We can normally get this blood even if you have DCC. Sometimes we cannot get the blood from the cord. If we cannot get the blood from the cord, we may need to take the blood from your baby.

Are there some babies that cannot have DCC?

DCC may not be possible to do if;

- there is a problem with the birth parent or baby at the birth. In that case, cord clamping will be done right away. We do that to start resuscitation or other medical treatment.
- there is bleeding from a tear in the cord or placenta. The doctor or midwife may decide clamp right away to stop the bleeding.

- Twins who share the same placenta (monochorionic twins). The 2 babies are connected by the single placenta. There is a small risk that blood could move from 1 twin into the other at the time of birth. Sometimes 1 twin has too much blood already. DCC would make the situation worse for that baby.
- It may also be difficult to do in some births. For example
 - twins who do not share a placenta
 - if the cord is very short.
- Some babies are born with problems found during pregnancy. They may need medical help soon after birth. The risks and benefits of DCC will be discussed with you. We will make a birth plan which is right for your baby.

Can I have DCC and also give cord blood to Anthony Nolan?

Anthony Nolan is a charity. It collects cord blood from 5 hospitals in the country. Cord blood can be used in stem cell transplants. It is used for people with blood cancers.

It is possible to have a DCC and also give cord blood. If you have your baby at Leicester's Hospitals a member of the Anthony Nolan Cord Blood Collection Team will see you. They will talk to you. They will talk to your midwife. They will record if you would or would not like to have a DCC. We will make sure the midwife caring for you in labour knows what you want to do.

We would normally advise a DCC for your baby. The blood in your baby's cord directly helps your baby. DCC will lower the amount of blood that is left in the cord, but is still possible to collect and bank the cord blood.

All babies are different in

- the length of the cord,
- the size of the placenta,
- the amount of cord blood.

Some babies can have a DCC and still have plenty of cord blood for banking. Others may have little cord blood left after DCC. Parents will not know how much cord blood their baby has until they are born. You need to think about this when deciding whether to plan for a DCC.

Parents need to know that a DCC may mean that their cord blood donation may be too small to be used for transplants. If this happens, they are not able to give to the cord blood bank. There may still be enough to be used in research. Research is also part of Anthony Nolan's Cord Blood Programme.

You can find out more about giving cord blood at the Anthony Nolan website. You can also fill in the consent form at anthonymolan.org/cord

Where can I find out more information?

More information about DCC can be found on these websites:

National Institute of Healthcare and Excellence

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs105/chapter/quality-statement-6-delayed-cord-clamping#quality-statement-5

World Health Organisation

www.who.int/tools/elena/interventions/cord-clamping

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

www.rcog.org.uk/media/ahppgoek/sip-14.pdf

Tommy's charity

www.tommys.org/pregnancy-information/giving-birth/delayed-cord-clamping-optimal

Human Tissue Authority

www.hta.gov.uk/guidance-public/umbilical-cord-blood-banking

National Library of Medicine:

Does Delayed Cord Clamping Improve Long-Term (≥ 4 Months) Neurodevelopment in Term Babies? A Systematic Review and a Meta-Analysis of Randomized Clinical Trials

*<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8071880/>

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اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અસ્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

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