

RELEASING PLACENTAS TO PARENTS – INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS

This information is intended to guide you through how to safely transport and dispose of your placenta if you decide to take it home with you (or to keep it at home following a home birth).

A placenta provides a perfect environment for micro-organisms to grow. There are some standard precautions you should be aware of for your health and safety and that of others in your household. In order to reduce the risk of spreading infections, the following steps should be followed:

1. The placenta should be put in 2 bags, each sealed separately and then placed into a leak-proof, sealed container to transport it home in. Once sealed, the container should not be re-opened until you arrive home.
2. A placenta will deteriorate quickly and should be stored in a fridge that does not contain any food for no more than 48-72 hours before it is disposed of.
3. While the risk of getting an infection from a healthy placenta is low, standard hygiene precautions should be followed, including handling it as little as possible, avoiding contact with food and drink, wearing protective gloves and always washing your hands thoroughly after any contact with it.
4. Avoid contact between blood from the placenta and breaks in the skin such as cuts, burns or sores. If blood does contaminate any of these areas, wash the area immediately with soap and water.
5. As a placenta is not considered 'bodily remains' there is no law to prevent you from burying it at home. If you decide to do so, it is your responsibility to ask your local council if there are any applicable guidelines and to follow them.
6. It is suggested that you bury the placenta at a depth of no less than 1 metre to prevent it being dug up by animals and becoming a potential source of infection.
7. The placenta should be free of any plastic cord clamps and not be buried in a plastic bag or container, due to not being biodegradable.
8. The placenta should not be buried in a location likely to contaminate a domestic water supply, near a river or on public land.
9. If you decide that you do not want to bury the placenta, it cannot be disposed of in a domestic waste bin. You may return it in a sealed container to the hospital for disposal.

RELEASE OF PLACENTA FORM

- I have received the information sheet 'Releasing placentas to parents' and have had the opportunity ask any questions.
- I understand that placental tissue is clinical waste and must be disposed of correctly.
- I take responsibility for the safe storage and disposal of the placenta. If not disposed of by myself, I understand it can be returned to the hospital for disposal.

Recipient's signature:

Print name:

Date:

Staff signature:

Print name:

Date:

Patient label here

*****Scan this form into BadgerNet Maternity once completed*****