

FAQ - Placenta Encapsulation

Where is the Placenta Encapsulation Process Done?

Crystal L. offers a safe option for encapsulation in my dedicated workspace with the use of a stainless steel workstation table certified by the National Safety Foundation (NSF Certified) in my home. Stainless steel is used in healthcare & food settings because of its non-porous nature, preventing bacteria from finding places to hide and grow. A commercial dehydrator is used to ensure each placenta is dehydrated at the proper temperature, while heat is evenly distributed for the entire duration of drying time. This ensures the placenta is heated quickly and efficiently to prohibit bacteria from developing. A pharmaceutical-grade capsule machine is used to provide a greater quality of both performance and safety and can withstand the same chemicals and heat processes for sanitation purposes.

How is the process done?

- The process begins with the placenta being rinsed and the removing of the umbilical cord and amniotic sac.
- The placenta is then prepared in the method of your choosing and dehydrated until it is complete.
- The dehydrated placenta is then ground into a fine powder and your capsules are filled.
- The capsules go through a quality check, get dusted off, and are filled into your bottle.
- All of the equipment is washed and submerged in a sanitizing bleach solution for 10 minutes. The entire workstation is cleaned and sanitized per OSHA standards to ensure all blood-borne pathogens are eliminated.
- The bottle is sanitized for 10 minutes and dried. Your name and quantity of capsules are written on the label.

FAQ - Placenta Encapsulation

What is in the placenta that my body needs?

There are many nutrients, vitamins, and hormones found in the placenta that work with your body to recover and heal from all aspects of childbirth—both physical and emotional. Encapsulating your placenta delivers them back to your body, speeding up your physical recovery time and aiding in a smooth transition from pregnancy to postpartum.

- **Vitamin B12**
Enables the body to produce energy by using fats and carbohydrates. Increased B12 can also treat and help prevent anemia.
- **Vitamin E**
Speeds up the bodies healing process and protects from toxins and free-radicals.
- **Vitamin B6**
Aids the central nervous system and supports adrenal function. It also helps to increase the speed of your metabolism and aids in the production of antibodies to boost your immune system.
- **Cytokines**
Help to heal and replace injured and damaged tissue by facilitating communication between cells in the body.
- **Iron**
Supplemental iron can increase the number of red blood cells carrying oxygen throughout the body, preventing exhaustion and increasing energy.
- **Stem Cells**
Speeds up the recovery process by aiding the healing of damaged tissue.
- **Hormones**
Estrogen, Progesterone, & Testosterone: Prepares the body and mammary glands for lactation, decrease postpartum mood swings and uterine cramping
- **Oxytocin**
Aids in maternal/infant bonding and decreases pain.
- **Corticotropin-Releasing Hormone** Decreases risk of postpartum depression.
- **Thyroid Stimulating Hormone**
Regulates the thyroid and metabolism, increases energy.
- **Interferon** Fights infection

FAQ - Placenta Encapsulation

- Prostaglandins
Help the uterus return to its pre-pregnancy state.
- Placental Opioid-Enhancing Factor
Decrease pain and induce a sense of well-being.
- Cortisone
Promotes healing by reducing swelling and inflammation in the body.

What are the benefits?

Taking your placenta capsules is the best thing a new mother can give back to her body post-birth. Taking placenta pills has been reported to help stabilize hormones, induce lactation & increase breastmilk production, support mental well-being, provide more energy, lend pain relief, and assisting in bonding. They also aid in balancing hormones and replenish depleted iron levels and provides 1/3 of your recommended daily intake (RDI) of iron. They assist in getting the uterus to shrink back down to return to its pre-pregnancy state (reducing the risk of postpartum hemorrhage), and reduces postpartum bleeding. The induction of lactation can be aided in providing mom with an increase in milk production while helping to maintain a healthy milk supply through the breastfeeding relationship– this has been proven in a study. Many women have reported having experienced positive moods and increased energy levels.

Prevention or a decrease in the risk of experiencing the “baby blues” or Postpartum Depression and Postpartum Anxiety is another benefit, and many women feel they heal a lot faster and can get back to their normal routine much quicker.

FAQ - Placenta Encapsulation

What is the Tincture used for?

In addition to your placenta capsules, you may also purchase a placenta tincture. Your tincture is truly an added bonus! Placenta tinctures can be used in addition to and long after your capsules are gone, during times of trauma, transition, or emotional distress, postpartum anxiety, premenstrual symptoms, and more. Your placenta tincture is made by tincturing a small amount of the placenta in a high grade, 100 proof alcohol and will be ready for use when your baby is six weeks old. It is recommended to allow the placenta to steep for at least six weeks before use but for maximum benefit, I recommend letting it steep for a full 6 months. Shaking it periodically will help it steep thoroughly. The tincture is very shelf-stable if kept sealed and in a cool dark place, such as a cupboard, and will last for many years. It does not need to be refrigerated. If you are interested in having enough placenta tincture to last your lifetime you may add 100 proof high-grade alcohol (vodka) to the bottle as the tincture is used, never allowing it to get below 1/2 full, though this may eventually reduce the potency if done too many times. Tincture may be taken by placing it in a small glass of water or juice. Dosage is included on the bottle label, but 7-10 drops is the normal recommended amount to take and may be taken a few times a day if needed. You can fill dropper from the top, to only get steeped liquid. Though many practitioners may mention your tincture being able to be used for your baby as well, it is important to acknowledge that children have a delicate balance of hormones, and your tincture may disrupt this balance. Unless under the care and advice of a licensed medical/naturopathic/homeopathic practitioner it is my recommendation that placenta remedies (including tinctures) should only be used by the mother they were made for.

FAQ - Placenta Encapsulation

How should I store my capsules?

After the encapsulation process is completed your placenta capsules will be placed in a sealed bottle and are shelf-stable if kept in a dry, cool dark place, such as a cupboard. Placenta capsules do not need to be refrigerated and this is not recommended due to the humidity causing mold in the capsules. After 6 weeks it is recommended to freeze any remaining capsules in a Ziploc freezer bag, and double bag them. Your placenta capsules may be taken directly from the freezer if you still take them daily. Placing them in the freezer after 6 weeks preserves their freshness and potency.

Are there times when I should especially take my capsules and times when I should not?

If you develop an infection such as mastitis, flu, or a common cold with fever it is recommended that you discontinue use until the illness/infection clears. Once symptoms subside you can start taking your placenta capsules again. You should also not take your placenta capsules or tincture when pregnant.

How long should I take my placenta capsules?

I recommend that a mother takes her capsules for the first few weeks postpartum at least, but it is best to continue taking them until they are gone. Some clients do set a few aside for future transitions that they feel they would benefit from taking their capsules during, such as returning to work, future moves, travel away from baby, the start of preschool/kindergarten, major illness, etc.

How should I take my placenta capsules?

Detailed recommended dosage instructions and storage instructions are right on the labels of all the placenta products for easy use. If you ever have any questions about the suggested usage, you can always give me a call any time.

FAQ - Placenta Encapsulation

How many capsules will I receive?

Placentas can range in size from 1-4 lbs and I have no way to predict the size until birth. However, on average, the majority of clients receive 100-210+ capsules.

What is an ideal time frame for the encapsulation process?

A placenta that has been handled properly and stored on ice and/or refrigerated must be picked up and the encapsulation process started, within 72 hours. The placenta should be stored in a cooler with ice or in the refrigerator until I arrive for pickup. However, typically I pick up majority of placentas for my clients within hours of birth during our pickup hours of 8:00am – 10:00pm and within 12 hours after birth if you deliver during the late evening and early morning hours.

Will the hospital release my placenta to me?

The hospitals all have policies that allow for a mom to take her healthy placenta home with her for any reason (cultural, religious, nutrition, etc.) However, some hospitals are much more placenta-friendly than others. The way to ensure the best placenta release outcome is to be prepared if necessary to continue to request the release of your placenta. Some hospitals may try to convince you not to keep your placenta, or tell you that it needs to be tested in pathology (because they know you cannot keep it once it is sent to pathology). You can simply deny any testing they suggest to the placenta if you wish, and continue to ask for the release of your placenta. It's also a good idea to not let it out of your sight and to have your spouse or family member take possession of it immediately after birth to avoid this issue. They may require you to sign a standard release form to have it released into your possession.

You should tell your doctor or midwife ahead of time that you plan to take your placenta home, and write it in your birth plan. This way if there is an issue, you

FAQ - Placenta Encapsulation

can deal with it before you are in labor. I also recommend that you mention your intentions again upon admission and then again once the placenta is birthed. Be friendly and cooperative when discussing your intentions to take home your placenta. You are not required to share with your care team what you intend to do with the placenta if you don't wish, just that you would like to have it after your baby is born & that it is not to be treated with any chemicals.

What is proper placenta care and handling?

As quickly as possible after the birth (at least within the first two hours after birth), the placenta should be placed into a food-grade container or gallon ziplock bag, sealed, and refrigerated, or placed on ice inside a cooler. Please be sure to replenish the ice often and it should never be left to melt.

For Hospital Births:

It is best to never let the placenta leave your site. Hospital staff are very busy and can easily be distracted and could accidentally discard your placenta or send it to pathology where it could be ruined for encapsulation. Your placenta is not their highest priority. Most hospitals will accommodate your wishes to take the placenta home by preparing it for transport, but once packaged they will not accept any responsibility for proper storage of it during your stay.

We recommend that either your spouse/partner, family member, birthing partner, or doula is in charge of the placenta once it is birthed so that it is properly stored and not lost or damaged.

PLEASE BE SURE TO BRING A COOLER WITH YOU TO THE HOSPITAL.

This will ensure you can properly store your hospital-packaged placenta following your birth. Medium-sized, soft-sided, or Styrofoam coolers all work well.

Hospital staff will package the placenta inside a container or biohazard bag that is sealed. This container/bag may also be labeled and/or placed inside of a bio-hazard bag. Once the placenta is packaged by hospital staff, please leave it in that packaging to avoid any cross-contamination.

FAQ - Placenta Encapsulation

As soon as possible, place the packaged placenta in your cooler and then add ice to ensure it will stay cold. Continue to replenish the ice as it melts to ensure the placenta does not spoil. If you have a private room & private refrigerator you can keep your placenta in there if the container fits.

If you forget a cooler, simply take the tub that you are given in your hospital room (washing/baby bathtub) and fill it with ice to place the packaged placenta on the ice. As long as it is kept cool and not allowed to spoil it will be fine until I arrive for pickup or you take it home and get it into the freezer. Placentas can be kept on ice/refrigerated for a few days before encapsulation if necessary, without any spoilage, but the sooner it can be prepared for encapsulation the better.

Can I still encapsulate if I have a C-section or medication?

Absolutely! If you have a c-section, let your nurse know that you plan to keep your placenta so that it does not go to pathology and instead, ask that they package it up for you.

With medication, the general rule is that it is safe to have during pregnancy, then it is safe for placenta encapsulation.

What is the difference between the steamed and non-steamed method of preparation?

The non-steamed method skips the steaming process and goes right to slicing and dehydrating the placenta. This method typically produces slightly more potent placenta powder because the hormones present in the placenta are exposed to less heat and processing vs. the steamed method. You will also typically receive a higher quantity of capsules vs. the steamed method.

The steamed method involves steaming the placenta to 160 degrees prior to dehydration. This can provide a more gentle dose of vitamins and hormones than the non-steamed method, and often results in slightly fewer capsules. This method is recommended for clients who test GBS+ or anyone who feels

FAQ - Placenta Encapsulation

they would prefer the extra peace of mind that bringing the placenta quickly to 160 degrees provides.

Both methods are safe for mom and baby, and both follow USDA standards for the consumption of food products.

What if I get a fever during labor?

During and after giving birth, a fever does not always indicate infection and is commonly associated with epidurals given during labor. If you have a fever for only a few hours before birth, then it is unlikely that the placenta is infected in any way. Your care provider can also determine if true infection is suspected by how the placenta looks, feels, and smells. Some area hospitals will also provide testing if they want to rule out infection, but inspection without testing is most common. Many clients that have had a fever during labor end up having clear lab test results two days postpartum, meaning the placenta is able to be safely encapsulated. True infection that renders the placenta unusable is statistically uncommon and when it does occur, there is no question that the placenta needs to be discarded.

What if I give birth prematurely?

Premature birth does not automatically make your placenta unfit for encapsulation and I have found that most care providers will still accommodate your wishes to take your placenta home with you. If your care provider suggests testing to the placenta due to premature birth, they (or you) may suggest either a blood test, sending only a piece of placenta to pathology, or a bed- side visual examination so you are still able to have your placenta encapsulated. However, in some cases the placenta does need to be sent to pathology for in-depth testing in order to determine a possible cause of preterm birth. **Any placenta that has been sent to pathology unfortunately I will not encapsulate due to the fact that I can not ensure that the placenta has not been cross contaminated.**