

VITALITY BIRTH SERVICES

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Information Sheet

CLIENT KEEP THIS FORM

Contact information for *Vitality Birth Services* representatives:

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Placenta Encapsulation

Placenta encapsulation is growing in popularity for new mothers with an interest in natural postpartum wellness. Encapsulation is a process of steaming, dehydrating, and grinding the placenta to be put in capsules for consumption. The ingestion of the placenta is known as 'placentophagy'. The purpose of placentophagy is to reintroduce into the mother's system the beneficial vitamins, minerals, hormones, proteins, and other nutrients that make up the placenta. Placentas are packed with iron, growth factors, B6, and hormones which have all been shown to be helpful in easing a new mother into her postpartum life. Even with steaming and dehydrating the placenta, the majority of the beneficial hormones and nutrients remain.

How is the Placenta Encapsulated?

Placenta encapsulation is the process of preparing the mother's placenta after the birth of her baby and making it available for ingestion in a capsule form. We prepare the placenta using the Traditional Chinese Medicine technique and begin by blessing and honoring the placenta for the life-giving force it provided in utero. If you choose, we will then make prints of your placenta (described below). The membranes and umbilical cord are separated and the placenta is steamed along with ginger, lemon and jalapeño peppers. We then dehydrate and grind the placenta into a powder for encapsulation.

All of our equipment for encapsulating is dedicated for use in this process and is thoroughly cleaned and sterilized with each use. We are trained and certified in blood-borne pathogen safety and ensure that sterilization and safety measures are met. We adhere to OSHA & EPA guidelines regarding blood-borne pathogen transmission and safe food handling. Placenta encapsulation is considered a food handling process, not a sterile medical procedure. All disposable equipment

and supplies are eliminated. Non-disposable equipment is thoroughly sterilized between each use.

About your Placenta

Your Placenta contains:

- Gonadotropin: the precursor to estrogen, progesterone and testosterone
- Prolactin: promotes lactation
- Oxytocin: the love hormone, promotes feelings of love and connectedness/bonding; produced during breastfeeding to facilitate bonding of mother and infant
- Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH): boosts energy, helps recovery from stressful events
- Cortisone: combats stress and unlocks energy stores
- Interferon: stimulates the immune system to protect against infections
- Prostaglandins: anti-inflammatory
- Hemoglobin: replenishes iron deficiency and anemia, a common postpartum condition
- Urokinase Inhibiting Factor and Factor XIII: stops bleeding and enhances wound healing
- Gammaglobulin: immune booster that helps protect against postpartum infections

Potential Benefits of Consuming your Placenta

- Decrease in anxiety and depression (post-partum depression or baby blues)
- Encourages early breastmilk production and increased milk supply
- Reduction of post-partum bleeding
- Iron levels balanced
- Increased maternal energy levels
- Slowing of postpartum bleeding

How many capsules will I get and how do I take them?

The typical placenta yields 70 to 130 capsules. Suggested dosage:

- The first week, 2-3 capsules 3 times a day
- The second and third week, drop down to 1-2 capsules 3 times a day
- The fourth week, 1-2 capsules twice a day and until they're gone if you wish and feel the need.

Your placenta supplement is complementary to the prenatal vitamins, fish oil supplements, or probiotics you may already be taking. Placenta is most effective in the first month, but can be started or stopped at any time.

How much does it cost?

Placenta Encapsulation: \$150.

How should my placenta be stored / transported?

You can pack your placenta in doubled up zip-lock bags with the air squeezed out and place it in the refrigerator or iced cooler until we pick it up. Your placenta may be kept at room temperature for up to 3 hours after birth, after which it needs to be placed in a refrigerator or cooler. If it is going to be more than 3 days for your placenta to be processed, it should be frozen. If you plan to transport your placenta it can be out for no more than 30 minutes, before it needs to be placed in a cooler or refrigerator.

If your placenta has been in the freezer for a while it can still be encapsulated. While fresh is ideal, you will enjoy the benefits of encapsulating and taking your placenta as a supplement later on in your postpartum period.

How long does the encapsulation process take?

Typically we start the process the evening we pick up the placenta. We complete the process the following day and can usually be ready for capsule delivery that afternoon. We try to deliver it within 24-48 hours from the time of pickup.

How do I store my capsules?

The capsules need to be stored in the dark jar provided and in a cool, dark, and dry place like a refrigerator. Although, refrigeration is not required.

What is the shelf life of my capsules?

It is undetermined as to how long the capsules maintain their potency. However, some women are choosing to save some for menopause. The potency will be expected to decrease if kept long term. We recommend they be kept in a freezer if you plan on saving them.

What else can I do with my placenta?

In addition to encapsulation, we also offer placenta prints. We can make a keepsake print image of your placenta before encapsulating. Many women enjoy having a print image of this amazing organ in addition to utilizing it as a supplement.

Many new moms also choose to save their baby's umbilical cord and have it dried as a keepsake—often in the shape of a heart—a permanent, physical reminder of the connection & love mother and child share. The dried cord can be framed in a small shadow box or deep frame for display, or kept in a safe, dry place for a more private memento.

Client Responsibilities:

It is the client's responsibility to notify either Crystal Briggs or Rebecca Richey when 1) birth is imminent or 2) as soon as possible after birth. It is imperative that the placenta is picked up as soon as possible, and preferable the same day as birth.

The client is responsible for discussing the release of the placenta with the personnel at the place of birth (doctors, nurses, midwives, doula, etc). This is to 1) ensure proper handling and storage

of the placenta and 2) ensure that the placenta will be released to us. Some hospitals may have release forms that need to be filled out.

It is also the client's responsibility to provide us with proof that they are clear of any blood-borne illnesses or other health issues that may become transmitted through the contact of bodily fluids.

If you are taking any medication or have any medical conditions that you are concerned about in regards to consuming your placenta, please talk to your medical provider and/or us.

Vitality Birth Services Responsibilities:

We will pick up your placenta shortly after your birth (ideally within 24 hours) from your home or birth center/hospital.

We will mindfully prepare your placenta for encapsulation.

We will deliver your placenta pills within 48 hours of receiving your placenta.