

Options for Honouring the Placenta

with Michelle from Monarch Mothering



This guide has been thoughtfully created to support education and informed choice around honouring the placenta.

You are welcome to print and share this resource with your clients for educational purposes, offering them the time and space to explore their options and discover what feels most aligned for them after the birth of their placenta.

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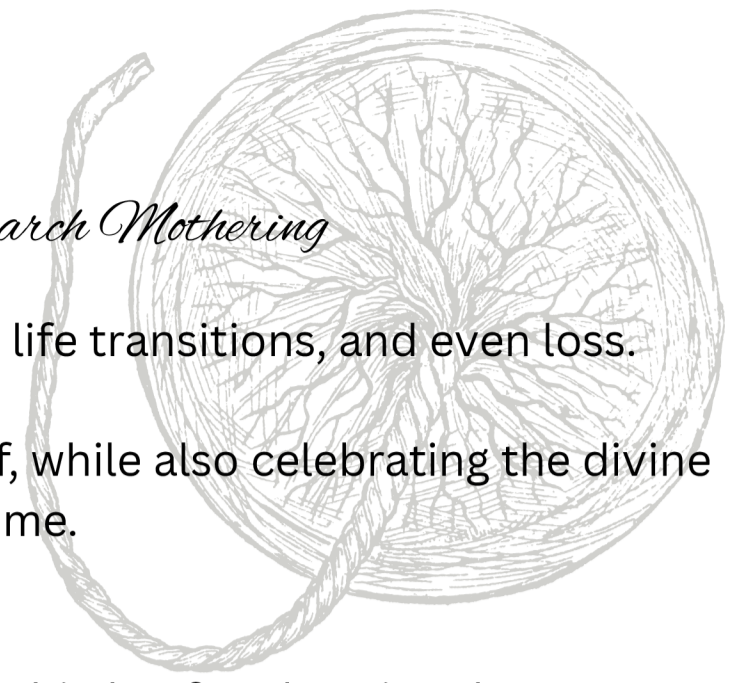
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Humans have always been drawn to ceremony, using rituals to mark life's most significant moments - birth, life transitions, and even loss.

Honouring the pregnancy, birth and placenta can be both a powerful way to release fears, doubts, and grief, while also celebrating the divine design, welcoming in new beginnings, respecting cultural traditions, and embracing this transformational time.

Cultures throughout the world celebrate the placenta and umbilical cord in many ways:

- many cultures believe the placenta is the baby's twin or companion, and thus should be kept close after birth, often burying the placenta under or close to their home. They believe it encourages fertility, good fortune and positive future development of the child.
- Some cultures dry and save the umbilical cord believing it is as a link between the child's life in the womb and after birth.
- In another culture, it is believed the placenta and umbilical cord hold the child's "life journey map", grounding and guiding the child through their journey in this physical life.
- Many Indigenous cultures believe the spiritual bioenergetics of placenta is evidence of the interconnectedness of the everything around us including the symbiotic and reciprocal relationship with the Earth

Options for Honouring the Placenta

Lotus Birth

Lotus birth is the practice of leaving the umbilical cord attached to the baby and placenta after birth, allowing it to naturally detach on its own, usually within 3 to 10 days. Instead of clamping and cutting the cord, the placenta is typically wrapped in cloth and treated with salt, herbs, or flowers while being kept near the baby.

The practice was named after Clair Lotus Day, who observed that chimpanzees do not separate their newborns from the placenta. Some parents who choose lotus birth believe it may offer benefits such as a gentler transition from the womb, increased oxygen and iron stores, and potential immune system support.

Currently, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) has not issued a formal statement on lotus birth. While there is little scientific research on the practice beyond personal experiences, it is important for families considering it to be informed about potential risks and to discuss with their care provider how to monitor their baby's health while the cord remains attached.



Whole, Raw Burial/Ceremony

Some families choose to keep the placenta close after birth, often through burial rituals that symbolize growth, good fortune, and a strong bond with the Earth. One common tradition is planting the placenta under or near the family home, a tree, or a flowering bush as a way to honour their child's future. If one chooses to bury the placenta fresh, it is best to do so within 48-72 hours. However, if it has been frozen, it can be buried at any time. To prevent animals from disturbing the site and to allow for healthy plant growth, the placenta should be buried at least two feet deep. If planting a tree or bush above it, this depth also helps protect delicate roots from potential heat produced during decomposition.

For families without access to a yard or garden, the placenta can also be buried in a large planter. In this case, it is often recommended to dehydrate and grind the placenta into a powder before mixing it with soil to support plant growth. Learn more within the next option.



Dehydrated Burial/Ceremony

If burying the whole placenta is not an option due to space, location, or practicality, dehydrating it into a powder allows for meaningful ceremony in a variety of ways. Powdered placenta can be sprinkled in gardens, planters, or even waterways, offering flexibility while still holding deep symbolic value. A planter is a great option if a family plans on moving homes, allowing them to bring this special connection with them.

A placenta powder ceremony package might include:

- A history of placenta ceremonies, ideas, and a template to help create their own ritual
- Dehydrated placenta powder in a glass jar for easy sprinkling in nature
- An art print to commemorate the experience
- An umbilical cord keepsake for display, a memory box, or burial

Creating a placenta ceremony is a beautiful way to honour this sacred time in their life, embracing both tradition and personal meaning as they step into parenthood.

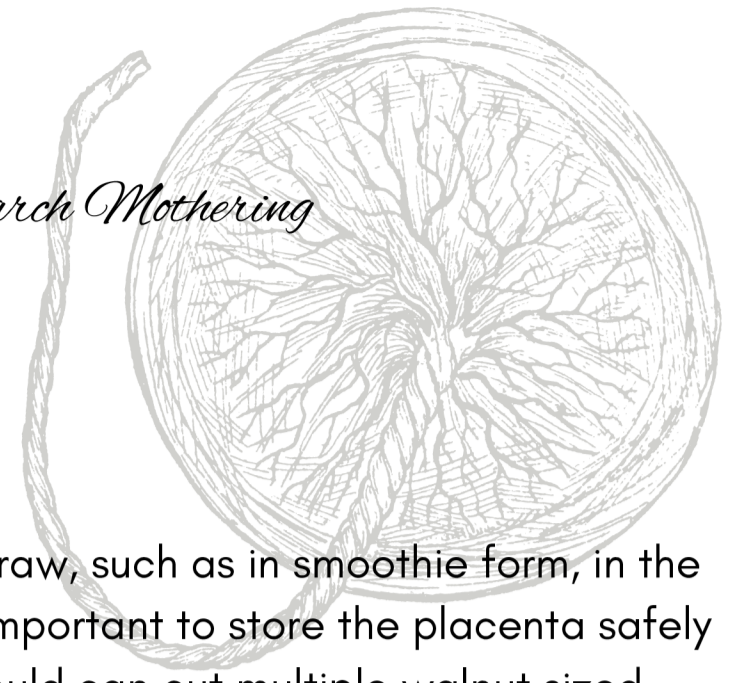


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Consumption - Raw

Some maternal experiences suggest it may be beneficial to consume the placenta raw, such as in smoothie form, in the first 24 hours after birth and throughout the first week of postpartum healing. It is important to store the placenta safely in the fridge within 3-4 hours of the birth and consume raw within 24 hours. One could cut multiple walnut sized pieces of the placenta and freeze if wanting more smoothies past the first 24 hours after birth. They can simply add the placenta piece into their favourite smoothie recipe for a powerhouse postpartum boost!

Reported benefits of consuming the placenta raw in a smoothie may include:

- Reduction in blood loss
- May decrease time it takes for breast milk to "come-in"
- Increase in energy and strength
- Provides an immediate, bio-available, hit of healing hormones
- An immediate supply of bio-available vitamins and minerals
- May help to halt postpartum haemorrhage due to blood clotting properties

Consumption - Encapsulation

The process of dehydrating the placenta to be consumed in capsule form. This process can be done by the family or they can hire a Certified Placenta Encapsulator to provide the service (recommended). The placenta is cleaned off of excess blood, sliced thin and placed in a dehydrator. After dehydrating, the placenta pieces are ground into a fine powder and placed in capsules.

Benefits reported by those that consumed their placenta:

- an early and continued healthy milk supply
- replenished iron and vitamin B stores
- increase in postpartum energy
- more restful sleep
- balanced hormones
- decrease need for pain medications
- decreased postnatal bleeding
- decreased risk of postpartum depression and anxiety

Consumption - Tincture

A placenta tincture is a concentrated liquid extract made with just two ingredients: one's own placenta and 100-proof alcohol.

Taken orally, it is quickly absorbed into the bloodstream, with some noticing benefits within 15-30 minutes. Placenta tinctures offer a simple, long-term way to continue benefiting from their placenta well beyond the postpartum period!

How It's Made:

- A small portion of placenta is cleaned, dehydrated, and ground into powder (or a raw, walnut-sized piece can be used. If using raw placenta, be sure to break up the piece with scissors).
- The placenta is placed in a dropper bottle and covered with approx. 4oz of 100-proof alcohol.
- The mixture sits in a cool, dark place for 6 weeks, shaken occasionally.
- After 6 weeks, the placenta can be strained out or leave it in for a more potent tincture.

Benefits of a Placenta Tincture:

- Supports hormone balance during menstrual cycles, menopause, or times of energetic need.
- Longer shelf life than capsules - lasts indefinitely when stored properly.
- Provides 280-400 doses (7-10 drops per use) per 4 oz bottle.

Consumption - Nourishing Treats

If the placenta has been dehydrated and ground, and one wants alternatives to consuming capsules, there are plenty of nourishing options:

- Smoothies - Open a capsule and blend it in.
- Butter for homemade chocolates - Infuse placenta dehydrated powder into melted butter.
- Homemade gummies - Steep dehydrated placenta powder in warm water/juice and strain before mixing into a gummy recipe.
- Teas & Soups - Steep a capsule worth of dehydrated placenta powder in hot water (strain before drinking) or blend into soup for added nourishment.

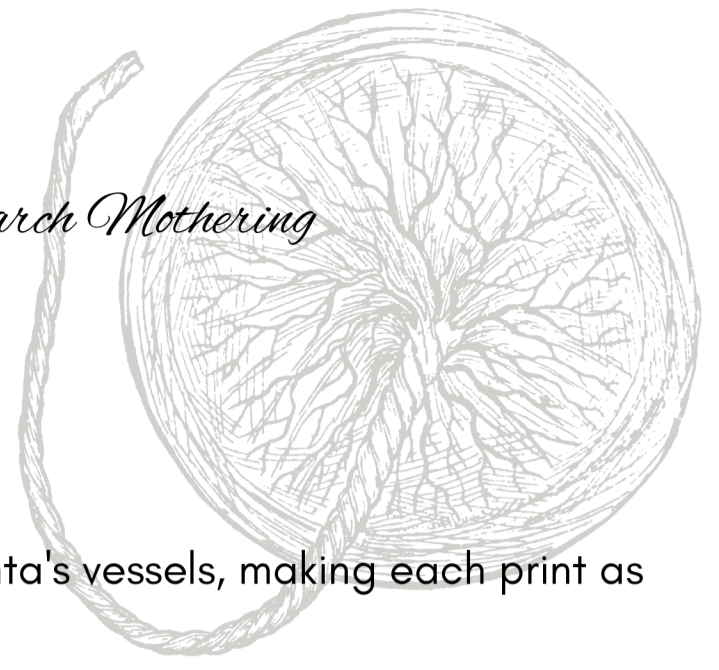
Benefits of consuming your placenta are supported by maternal experience and have not been evaluated by Health Canada or the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

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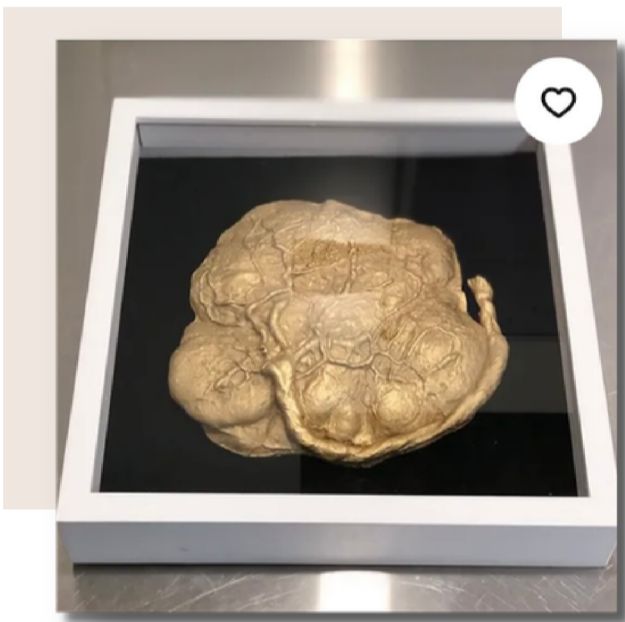
Art - Prints

Placenta prints beautifully capture the "Tree of Life" pattern created by the placenta's vessels, making each print as unique as the baby.

How it's made:

- The fetal side of the placenta is typically used for the clearest print.
- The print can be made using natural blood, food-safe dyes, or acrylic* paint (*acrylic only if not consuming the placenta)
- The amniotic sac is removed, and excess blood is rinsed off (if not creating a natural blood print).
- The placenta is placed on a hard surface, fetal side up, and acid-free, water colour paper is gently pressed onto the placenta to create the print.

Placenta prints offer a meaningful keepsake to honour this incredible organ and can be a beautiful piece of art to display in one's home!



Art - Placenta Casting

A plaster replica of the placenta's unique shape and details. It can be framed or displayed, and if made with non-toxic, body-safe molding materials, the placenta can still be consumed afterward.

This creative offering beautifully celebrates the pregnancy and birth journey while honouring the incredible role the placenta plays throughout it.



Art - Amniotic Sac Art

Using dehydrated amnion or chorion membranes or sac, one can create a delicate, one-of-a-kind piece. Some artists also preserve the membranes or sac in resin for a lasting keepsake.

This artistic option provides a beautiful way to celebrate the pregnancy and birth journey while honouring the placenta's incredible role!



Art - Umbilical Cord Keepsake

Dehydrated umbilical cord keepsakes offer a beautiful way to honour a baby's birth.

They can be:

- Buried in a garden or planter as a symbolic gesture.
- Kept in a memory box alongside other special mementos.
- Displayed in a decorative frame for a meaningful home keepsake.

One Father framed the dried stub of their first child's cord and the heart-shaped cord of their second as a Mother's Day gift (pictured left) - a unique and heartfelt tribute!



Jewelry

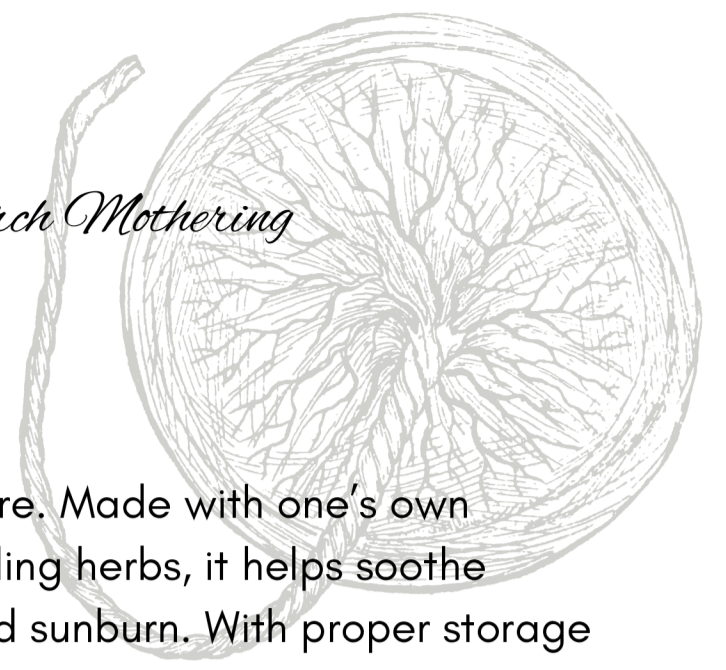
Preserve the memory of the pregnancy and birth journey with unique placenta jewelry. Dehydrated placenta powder can be encased in glass or resin to create one-of-a-kind earrings, necklaces, or rings. It can also often be combined with baby's first hair, breastmilk, dried flowers, or ashes of a loved one for a deeply personal keepsake.

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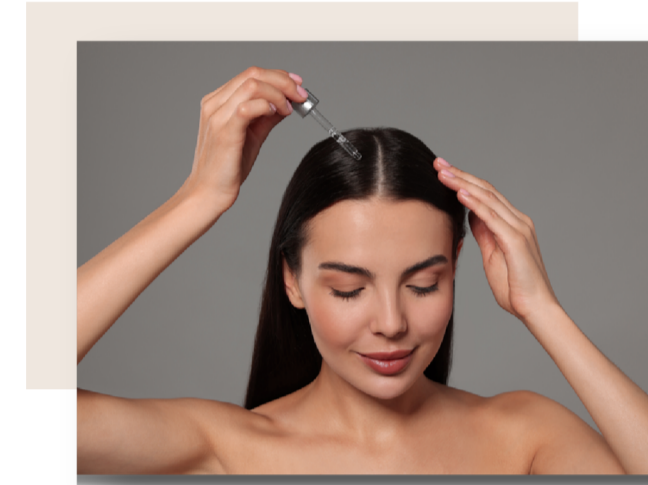
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Body Care - Salve

A placenta salve is a natural, nourishing remedy for postpartum and family skincare. Made with one's own placenta powder and organic ingredients such as coconut oil, beeswax, and healing herbs, it helps soothe diaper rash, cracked nipples, stretch marks, dry skin, eczema, scars, bug bites, and sunburn. With proper storage and clean application, it lasts up to a year. Usually lightly scented with organic natural fragrances such as lavender, a soothing salve provides comfort and care for both parents and baby.



Body Care - Hair Oil

Harness the natural benefits of the placenta for healthier hair. Bovine placenta extracts have been shown to promote hair growth and reduce shedding by improving blood flow to hair follicles. A nourishing hair oil can be created using dehydrated placenta powder blended with argan oil, rosemary extract, or another high-quality serum base to support stronger, fuller hair.



Body Care - Face Serum

Placenta is rich in growth factors and peptides that may support collagen production, improve skin elasticity, and reduce fine lines. Many skincare products use bovine placenta for its potential anti-aging benefits - a new parent can also harness the power of their own placenta by creating a nourishing face oil.

BONUS: DIY Placenta Infused Face Serum Recipe

- 4 tbsp jojoba oil
- 4 tbsp rosehip oil
- 1-4 capsules of *dehydrated placenta powder* (approx 1-2 tsps of powder) ***do not use raw placenta***
- 20-40 drops essential oils (optional: frankincense, lavender, sandalwood)

Gently heat in a mini crock pot the jojoba and rosehip oil with the contents of placenta capsules for 4-5 hours, then cool and strain into sterilized glass jar.

Add essential oils if desired, mix well, and store in an amber glass dropper bottle.

Apply a drop to forehead, cheeks, and chin, massaging until absorbed.

Store in a cool, dark place for up to one year.

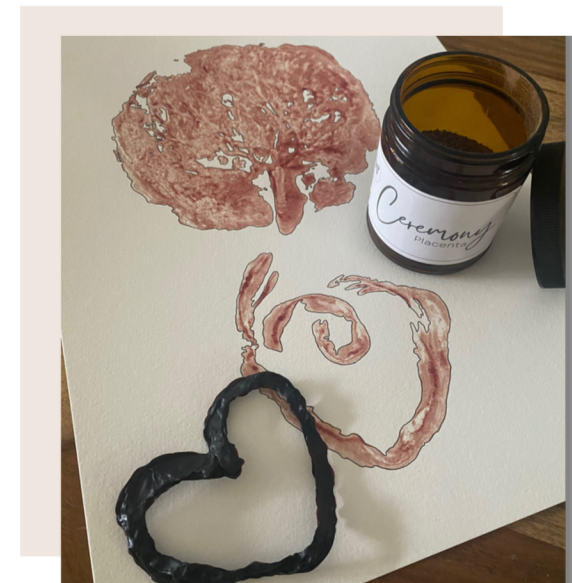
Honouring the Placenta in Loss

Honouring the placenta can be a beautiful representation of life, however, many of these options can also be created in honour of those experiencing loss through miscarriage, termination for medical reasons (TFMR), stillbirth or infant loss.

If the birth took place in a hospital setting, the parent is legally allowed to receive their placenta if they wish.

If they miscarried at home, a full spectrum doula can help support.

Honouring the pregnancy and baby through ceremony, prints, jewelry, an umbilical cord keepsake and/or burial can be a healing act.



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