



CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINE

Placenta being taken home: Safe Handling

This document should be read in conjunction with the [Disclaimer](#)

Aim

- Appropriate handling and storage of a placenta which is being taken home by the woman.
- To comply with Operational Directive [0398/12 Release of Human Tissue and Implanted Medical Devices](#)

Key Points

- All requests to take a placenta home must have been assessed by a midwife or medical officer who has been involved in the care of the woman.
- The health professional conducting the assessment must only release the placenta if they are satisfied that the arrangements for transport, storage and disposal will not constitute a public health risk.
- A placenta that may pose a risk of infectious disease risk: including but not limited to a placenta from a woman suspected or known to carry Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or multi resistant bacteria, confirmed maternal infection or suspected / confirmed chorioamnionitis must not be released.
- It is the woman's responsibility to find out from her local council if there are any applicable guidelines about placenta disposal and to follow them.
- There is currently no data to support claims that ingesting a placenta has any health benefits or evidence to advise women about eating their placenta.

Procedure

- Requests to release a placenta should be discussed with the midwife, obstetrician and operating room staff prior to the birth or operative procedure when possible
- If no pathology examination is required, double bag and seal the placenta in clear plastic waste bags.
- Place in a rigid walled leak proof container for the purposes of storage and transport.
- Once sealed the placenta should not be opened again while on hospital premises.

- The container is to be dated and labelled “Human tissue for collection by < insert name of individual>
- The placenta should be taken home on the day of birth and stored in a cool place. Short term storage **is not** available at KEMH.
- The individual must receive information about the safe disposal of the placenta and complete the *Authorisation and Release of Human Tissue and Explanted Medical Device Consent Form* MR 355.10 (see [OD 0398/125](#))
- The placenta may not be taken until all documentation is completed.
- The consent form must be signed by the individual and the midwife/nurse. The original form is to be retained in the patient health record.
- Where no request to remove the placenta from the hospital is received, the placenta will be disposed of after a month, unless it is sent for formal pathological examination in which case it will be retained as per PathWest protocols for six weeks.







References and resources

Related policies

[OD 0398/12 Policy for The Release of Human Tissue and Explanted Medical Devices](#)

Related WNHS policies, procedures and guidelines

FORM MR 355.10- Authorisation and Release of Human Tissue and Explanted Medical Device Consent Form

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