

Umbilical Cord - Bleeding

Definition

- Bleeding occurs from cord's point of separation
- The navel is also called the belly button or umbilicus
- The piece of cord that stays on the baby is called the umbilical stump

Health Information

Causes

- Cord has fallen off or is getting ready to fall off
- Cord got caught on something
- Navel rubs against something, such as the diaper

Care Advice

1. **Overview:**
 - A few drops of blood are normal after the cord falls off. A small amount of bleeding can also occur when the cord catches on something.
 - The diaper rubbing against the belly button may make it start up again.
 - Here is some care advice that should help.
2. **Bleeding:**
 - To stop bleeding, put direct pressure on the navel for 10 minutes. Use a clean cloth.
 - Clean the area before, rather than after.
 - Reason: This helps prevent bleeding from starting back up.
3. **Diaper:**
 - Prevent the diaper from rubbing on the cord.
 - Do this by folding the diaper down away from the belly button.
 - You can also cut a wedge out of the diaper. Then seal the edge with tape.
4. **What to Expect:**
 - The bleeding may come back a few times.
 - It should only be a small smear of blood.
 - The bleeding site should heal up by 2 days.

Call Your Doctor If

- Bleeding gets worse
- Few drops of blood but lasts more than 3 days
- Your baby starts to look or act abnormal
- You think your baby needs to be seen

Pediatric Care Advice

Author: Barton Schmitt MD, FAAP

Copyright 2000-2020 Schmitt Pediatric Guidelines LLC

Disclaimer: This health information is for educational purposes only. You the reader assume full responsibility for how you choose to use it. The information contained in this handout should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. Listing of any resources does not imply an endorsement.