

- Never pull the cord/pito off, it will come off itself, and it is normal to sometimes have a little bleeding. If there is on-going bleeding from the cord/pito, or you are concerned contact your midwife
- After separation; dried, crusted blood is usual.

Sometimes the cord/pito can have a slightly unpleasant smell, this is normal.


**If you are concerned about the cord/pito contact your midwife or family doctor immediately.**

# Cord Care Belly Button Care Pito Care

Information for Pregnant Women and Whanau



[www.countiesmanukauhealth.org.nz](http://www.countiesmanukauhealth.org.nz)

 <p>COUNTIES MANUKAU HEALTH</p>	<p><b>Department:</b> Women's Health</p> <p><b>Approved by:</b> Director of Midwifery</p> <p><b>Owner:</b> Midwife Educator</p>	<p><b>Updated:</b> Oct. 2018</p> <p><b>Review:</b> Oct. 2021</p>
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Women's Health Division

## Caring for Baby's Belly Button/Pito

Before the birth of your baby, nutrients and oxygen were passed from your placenta (whenua/afterbirth) to the baby through the blood in the umbilical cord.

At birth we use sterilised, very clean scissors to cut the cord after it is clamped with a sterile clamp. This is to stop any serious infection from getting into the baby's blood stream.

At first the cord/pito appears blue-white and then gradually yellows to brown and then black.



Picture of newborn with cord/pito still attached and clamp in place

The plastic cord clamp used at birth is usually removed once the cord/pito is dry.



Cord/pito after it has dried and clamp removed



Sometimes muka, a tie made from Harakeke/ flax fiber can be used to tie the umbilical cord.

The Cord/pito can take a week to ten days for it to fall off.



Bath the baby in clean, warm water and clean the bath after each use.

As the cord has no feeling in it you can pat it dry without hurting baby.

**Do not use:** (unless prescribed by your midwife or GP)

- any powders including talcum
- lotions and oils (like coconut oil) directly around the cord

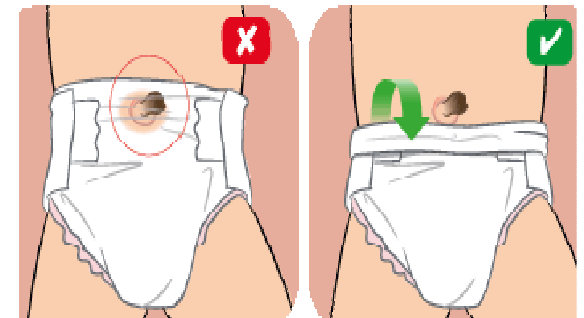
- any other type of treatment
- These can increase the risk of infection and might slow down the normal process.

### Signs of infection are:

- cord/pito having a foul offensive (really nasty) smell
- sticky discharge
- a hot red area (flare) on the skin of the abdomen (tummy) around the belly button/pito
- baby gets a sudden high temperature or seems unwell
- Or if you have any concerns, questions or worries

### Caring for the cord/pito

- If possible fold the nappy down to keep cord above edge as long as it has not fallen off



- If urine or meconium soils the cord/pito clean it off with water