

Health Implications to Consider with Placenta for Consumption

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--New trend, not ancient wisdom: postpartum placenta consumption first briefly explored in 1970s, and then became a mega-trend starting in 2005 from encapsulation method and social media. Now becoming integrated into midwifery and doula services, becoming more mainstream, and many moms now see it as a status symbol. Financial markets developing raises conflict of interest issues (1,2,3,5,16)

--No human culture in history has ever documented having postpartum women consume their placenta. Traditional Chinese Medicine never had in the traditional text for postpartum women to consume placenta; it was in opposition to the properties for postpartum, TCM only rarely used, primarily as a Qi tonic for males. Ancient wisdom is ceremonial burial (1,2,3,4)

--"Benefits" purported and being spread about therapeutic uses and need for this as a necessary 'balancing of hormones' and nutrients for postpartum women sourced from the 2006 Placenta Benefits (PBi) business marketing, with no valid evidence to support (1,2,5,16,18)

--2016 study showing no iron benefit for moms in consuming encapsulated placenta (6)

--2016 Research study showing what hormones remain in placenta pills - only progesterone and estrogens are retained and active after steaming and processing for encapsulation (7)

--Hormonal re-intake of progesterone and estrogen in the postpartum period is **altering the natural hormonal state** of women after birth (7,8,11,12,13,14)

--"Baby Blues" 3 days after birth is not postpartum depression, it is the **hormonal cycling** into lactation hormones, and should not be 'prevented.' Pregnancy hormones are not meant to remain after birth. Ancient wisdom is to trust a woman's body, not to fear it. Postpartum depression is not an automatic result of pregnancy ending (8,10,11,12,14)

--Pregnancy through postpartum/lactation hormonal cycle: progesterone and estrogen are necessary in pregnancy, but are inhibitors of prolactin. These pregnancy hormones leaving your body at birth is what triggers your milk to come in = lactogenesis II. **Taking placenta back in after birth inhibits prolactin from binding and producing milk.** Some women's milk supply may be able to withstand this hormonal suppression, but many don't. This is like having retained placenta or taking hormonal birth control pills, which can lower milk supply (8,9,12,13,14,15)

--Many local and national case studies show low milk supply with placenta consumption. Lactation consultants, all with no conflict of interest, reporting this

--The dramatic mood and energy surge women report is plausible due to effects from high steroid hormone levels in the pills. Is this dramatic effect a natural state for postpartum?(5,7,11)

--Increased thromboembolism risk (blood clots,stroke) with continued estrogen intake(7,9,15,16)

--Infants and toddlers are also advised to be given the placenta powder and tincture as natural medicine. What are the implications for children ingesting progesterone and estrogens? (7,16)

--2017 CDC Released Case Report on infant re-hospitalized in the NICU for GBS bacterial infection from the same strain of GBS in placenta capsules mom was taking (17,18)

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