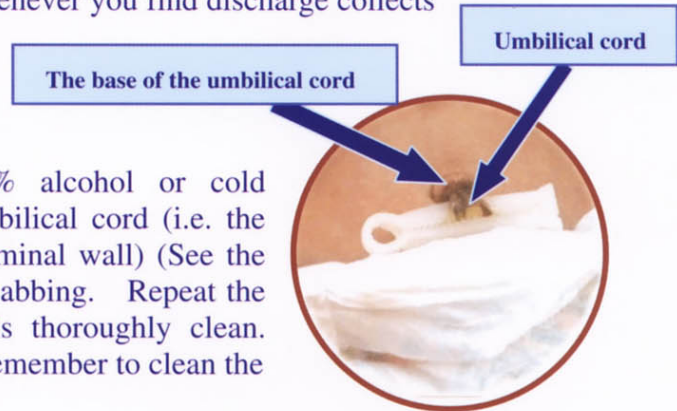




Care of the Umbilical Cord



1. The umbilical cord usually separates between 5 to 10 days after birth. But in some babies it may take three weeks or longer to separate.
2. Clean the umbilical cord for 3-4 times a day (e.g. after bathing or changing nappy) to keep it clean and dry. However, you have to clean it whenever you find discharge collects at the base of the cord.



3. How to clean the umbilical cord:
Use a cotton bud soaked with 70-75% alcohol or cold boiled-water* to clean the base of the umbilical cord (i.e. the connection between the cord and the abdominal wall) (See the photo). Use a new cotton bud for each swabbing. Repeat the swabbing until the bottom of the cord is thoroughly clean. Finally, swab and clean the cord stump. Remember to clean the cord gently to avoid bleeding.
4. Do not wrap the nappy too tight and keep it underneath the cord. This can help to keep the cord dry and prevent the nappy from rubbing the cord causing bleeding.
5. Do not use any dressing to cover the umbilicus or apply any medication such as oil, ointment, cord-powder or band-aid, etc. on it.
6. You may notice a few drops of blood on the nappy around the time the stump falls off. It is normal. Continue to clean the umbilicus with alcohol or cold boiled-water regularly until it is completely dry. The wound will heal up within 2-3 days and the oozing will subside.
7. Please bring your baby to MCHC or General Out-Patient Clinic / Family Doctor early if you notice the following conditions:
 - ✚ Signs suggestive of cord infection, like having red skin around the base of the cord, foul smelling or collection of pus
 - ✚ Presence of lumps at the umbilicus after the cord has fallen off
 - ✚ The cord and umbilicus seem pushing outward when the baby cries
8. If there is severe bleeding from the cord, please bring your baby to the A & E Department so that medical staff can help to stop the bleeding early and to find out the cause of bleeding.



* Please follow the recommendation from the hospital where the baby is delivered.