

# Did you test positive for GBS?



It is important to us at Florida Placenta Services that you understand Group B Strep & its relation to placenta encapsulation so you can make an informed decision.

# What is Group B Strep?

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Group B Streptococcus, often called Group B Strep or GBS, is a type of bacteria commonly found in the intestines, rectum, and vagina. It's usually harmless in adults and isn't a sexually transmitted disease. However, it can be a concern during pregnancy because it can be passed to the baby during childbirth.

- **How Common is it?**

Many people carry Group B Strep without knowing it because it typically doesn't cause any symptoms. In fact, about 10–30% of pregnant women have GBS. It's a normal part of the bacteria found in the body.

- **Why is it Important in Pregnancy?**

While GBS doesn't usually cause problems for the mother, it can be harmful to newborns. Babies exposed to GBS during delivery can develop serious infections like pneumonia, sepsis (a severe blood infection), or meningitis (infection of the fluid and lining around the brain). These infections can be life-threatening, which is why it's important to know if you have GBS before giving birth.

- **How Do I Know if I Have Group B Strep?**

Around 35 to 37 weeks of pregnancy, your doctor or midwife will likely offer you a simple test for GBS. This involves taking a swab from your vagina and rectum. It's quick and painless, and it's the best way to determine if you carry the bacteria.

- **What Happens if I Test Positive?**

If you test positive for GBS, don't worry. It doesn't mean you or your baby will definitely get sick. It just means that precautions need to be taken during delivery. Typically, you'll be given antibiotics through an IV during labor. This greatly reduces the chance of passing the bacteria to your baby during vaginal delivery. The risk of transmission to your baby is less than 2% without antibiotics. When given antibiotics the risk to your baby diminishes even more!

If you don't get tested, your healthcare provider might give you antibiotics if you don't have your test results back yet.

- **Can Group B Strep Be Prevented?**

There's no way to completely prevent carrying GBS, as it's a natural part of the body's bacteria. However, the testing and treatment plan during pregnancy and labor is very effective in preventing the bacteria from harming your baby & infecting your placenta.

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Group B Strep is common and usually harmless for adults, but it's important to check for it during pregnancy to protect your baby during delivery. The testing is straightforward, and if you test positive, getting antibiotics during labor can help ensure your baby and your placenta are free of GBS

- **My Two Cents**

There was a SINGLE case in the US of a GBS infected newborn in 2018 that sparked controversy over placenta encapsulation. According to the CDC. It is my understanding that the newborn was in the NICU being treated for GBS infection for 11 days. When the newborn was released he/she then reacquired the infection and had to be treated for this reinfection. The placenta capsules tested positive for GBS so there was an assumption that this may have caused the reinfection. The specialist reported a low temperature (115–140) during dehydration and the total time of dehydration was also not sufficient. I believe

that the improper dehydration process could have lead to the placenta being infected with GBS. Whether the newborn was reinfected by the placenta pills themselves, I am unsure.

As a Midwife, I was interested in learning more a protecting my clients & their baby's to the best of my ability. I spent months swabbing raw & dehydrated placentas and sending cultures to the lab. After months of this. I did not receive anv positive GBS

### ***Important Things to Note:***

1

- A Canadian study stated that GBS cannot survive in dry heat of 160-170 degrees for 1 hour or moist heat (steaming) of 121 degrees for 15 mins. Our process is to dehydrate your placenta at 160 degrees for 24 hours.

2

- Receiving antibiotics in labor or prior to your c-section treats GBS so that your placenta and your baby are not infected.

3

- If you are suspected to have an infection in labor we DO NOT recommend encapsulation.
- If your baby is in the NICU for suspected infected, we DO NOT recommend encapsulation.