

You're eating what? Some say placenta pills can aid postpartum problems

Aug. 3, 2013 | 0 Comments

Recommend

3 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends.

Recommend 3

A A



'Big Bang Theory' actress Mayim Bialik is among celebrities who opted to consume her placenta after giving birth for its beneficial impacts on post-partum health. / Dan MacMedan/USA Today file

Written by Evelyn Gilbert Manziello For the Poughkeepsie Journal

FILED UNDER

- News
- Health
- Kingston
- Vassar Brothers Medical Center

Most people know that pregnant women with cravings sometimes eat unusual things. However, a growing trend among new moms in the Hudson Valley and nationwide has some people saying, "You're eating what?"

Since most mammals eat their own placentas after giving birth, some feel that humans should, too. Placentophagy, the practice of placenta consumption after giving birth, has become such a hot topic that New York Magazine featured an article about it a couple of years ago, and there are even books and websites with placenta recipes.

Why would moms want to eat their own internal organ? The placenta nourishes the growing baby while it's developing and is full of iron, vitamins and hormones. However, little scientific research has been conducted on the benefits of women ingesting their placentas.

In traditional Chinese medicine, placental extracts are commonly mixed with herbs and taken to relieve pain and stimulate milk production, among other things. According to placenta-eating supporters, while the benefits may not be scientifically proven, anecdotal evidence of how ingesting afterbirths can help moms is quite convincing.

New mothers can consume their placentas in various ways, said Jessica Walsh, a placenta services provider and owner of Illuminated Baby, a natural parenting store in Woodstock.

Some people eat it raw; consume it in a broth, a tea, a tincture or a smoothie; or cook it with other foods and eat it. Others use a placenta salve preparation or eat placenta-infused truffles. But the most popular option is encapsulation.

Depending on which method and provider you choose, costs range from about \$150 to \$250 locally.

The provider comes to the hospital or wherever the mom is giving birth and takes the placenta to prepare it for consumption. It is usually placed in a sterile bucket or biohazard bag and kept in a freezer or in a cooler on ice until it is encapsulated.

Generally, the provider delivers the edible afterbirth back to the

Most Popular Most Commented More Headlines

- 1 IBM announces weeklong furloughs after credit downgrade, stock dip
- 2 Former psychiatric center site to be economic boon for Dover, developer says
- 3 Dateline: Once leisurely, Taconic transforms
- 4 City school district superintendent to focus on quality
- 5 Beacon man gets 11 1/2 years in prison for throwing infant against a wall

Most Viewed

Foreigners Depart Sanaa Amid Qaeda Alert Aug. 07, 2013



PHOTO GALLERIES



Rhinebeck High School Graduation



Hike of Week 8/8/13

SPONSORED LINKS

by Taboola



Surprising Abraham Lincoln Descendant... ancestry.com



Do You Need \$100,000 to Make a The Life Wiki



'The Big Bang Theory' star Mayim Bialik, left, and 'Mad Men' actress January Jones are among the celebrities who have decided to consume their placentas after giving birth believing that it wards off postpartum problems. / Dan MacMedan/USA Today file

new mother within a day or two.

"It's important for the mother to begin taking the capsules within the first few days following the birth," Walsh said. "Around the 72-hour mark, there is a dramatic decrease in hormone levels at which point women may begin experiencing symptoms associated with 'baby blues' such as weepiness, low energy, feelings of loss or disconnection. The capsules help to minimize the negative effects of this shift by stabilizing the overall body function and promoting a balanced hormonal state."

Placentophagy primer

The act of eating one's placenta after giving birth is gaining popularity. But is this choice right for you?

Read up: Before you decide to ingest your afterbirth, do some research. Talk to other moms who have done it and review the limited studies that have been conducted as well as anecdotal information.

Pinpoint your goals: Do you want to eat your placenta to try to prevent postpartum depression or increase energy or milk production? Discuss your reasons with your health-care provider and other experts.

Policy check: If you plan to give birth in a hospital, find out if it has a placenta release policy. Some do, but some don't, which may become an obstacle if you don't work it out with the hospital ahead of time. Vassar Brothers Medical Center, Northern Dutchess Hospital and Putnam Hospital Center all provide consent and acknowledgment forms that allow moms to take their placentas home.

Pick the right provider: A placenta services provider should be trained in blood-borne pathogens, OSHA and EPA guidelines, as well as food safety and sanitation guidelines. The person you select should also have a proven track record in maintaining a safe work area, proper handling of placentas, and appropriate preparation methods in accordance with the highest safety standards. Word-of-mouth is also invaluable. Ask local midwives, doulas and others if they can recommend an experienced placenta services provider.

Benefits

Placentophagy is anecdotally reported to:

- Restore a more balanced body function.
- Increase energy and decrease fatigue postpartum.
- Increase and enrich breast milk production.
- Decrease symptoms of postpartum depression and "baby blues."

shorten postpartum recovery by shrinking the uterus to its pre-pregnancy state and lessen postpartum bleeding.

Source: Jessica Walsh, a placenta services provider and owner of Illuminated Baby, a natural parenting resource in Woodstock.

OPEN



The raw placenta can be made into capsules that a new mother can take as a supplement. / Photo courtesy of Courtney Durfee/Hudson Valley PI



The placenta can be made into a salve as well, as in the jar in this photo. The umbilical chord is not consumed but can be kept as a keepsake. / Photo courtesy of Courtney Durfee/Hudson Valley PI

Page 1 2 3 Next

Evelyn Gilbert Manziello is a writer and editor based in Kinderhook. She has written for and edited a number of health-related magazines. Contact her at Evhotstory@aol.com.

View Comments (0) | Share your thoughts »

TOP VIDEO PICKS
selected by Taboola

Snowden, A-Rod, Shark Week | USA NOW video
Aug 2, 2013

Obama talks Snowden, Trayvon Martin on Leno
Aug 7, 2013

YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN

Many IBM workers to get furloughs

VIDEO: Manning brothers rapping, awesomely awful

Hyde Park police release photos of armed robbery...

Beekman awaits attorney general's residency rule

Conn. man allegedly involved in East Fishkill...

Is It the End of Stainless Steel?
(Oven Info)

SPONSORED LINKS

Vanessa Williams DNA Test Showed Genes From Across the... (Ancestry.com)

Iraq Veteran and Cardinals Cheerleader Arrested for... (Sports Illustrated)

Low-Cost Upgrades That Make a Kitchen Look Brand New (HouseLogic)

Discovering death details from family's history (Ancestry.com)

Family, Friends Gather in Long Island to Mourn... (DNAinfo)

2013 Ford C-MAX Energi Test Drive And Review: Big Tech... (Forbes) [?]

911 Call: Usher's 7-year-old son hurt in p...
7, 2013

OPEN

SPONSORED LINKS



Surprising Abraham Lincoln Descendants ...
ancestry.com



Do You Need \$100,000 to Make a Living
The Life Wiki



Top 10 Golf Swing Killers?
Revolution Golf

by Taboola

NEWS

- Special reports
- Commuter Central
- Databases
- Nation & World
- Education
- 7-day archives
- Submit your news
- Crime & Courts

GREAT TASTES

- Reviews
- Recipes
- Healthy Eating

OBITUARIES

LIFE

- Living & Being
- Busy Cook
- Horoscopes
- Vow Factor/Weddings
- Games/Fun
- Crosswords
- Health

TOWNS

- Northern Dutchess Co.
- Central Dutchess Co.
- Southern Dutchess Co.
- Ulster County

OPINION

- Editorials
- Letters to the Editor
- Editorial cartoons
- Valley Views
- All columnists

SPORTS

- HS Sports
- Golf
- Varsity Club
- Marist sports
- Players: Rec sports

THINGS TO DO

- TV listings
- Nightlife/Dining
- Music
- Welcome to the heart of the Hudson Valley

BUSINESS

- Business & Industry 2013
- IBM
- Young Professionals

FOLLOW US

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Mobile
- RSS
- E-mail Alerts

News | Jobs | Cars for Sale | Homes for Sale | Apartments for Rent | Shopping

GANNETT

Copyright © 2013 www.poughkeepsiejournal.com. All rights reserved.
Users of this site agree to the [Terms of Service](#), [Privacy Notice/Your California Privacy Rights](#), and [Ad Choices](#)