SAFE DELIVERY
support material for teachers compiled by Dr Natalie Greenwald, Obstetrician

Neema, a traditional birth attendant, follows 10 steps to ensure the healthy arrival of a baby.

**Step 1: Have the right equipment**


**Step 2: Sterilize knife/blade**

Boiling instruments for 30 minutes will greatly reduce the risk of transmitting infection to the newborn infant.

**Step 3: Put down a clean plastic sheet**

Plastic sheeting protects mother and baby from infection.

**Step 4: Tie back hair**

This is more hygienic

**Step 5: Wash Hands**

Washing hands properly reduces the spread of infection

**Step 6: Wear sterile gloves**

Gloves reduce the risk of infection to mother and to birth attendant. HIV and Hepatitis spreads through contact with blood.

**Step 7: Clean and dry baby well. Keep the baby warm**

- Cooling of the baby after birth can lead to hypothermia.
- Clearing of the mouth and nose reduces risk of asphyxia.
- Vigorous rubbing of baby dry stimulates baby’s responses and

**Step 8: Cut umbilical cord correctly**

Cutting the cord must be done carefully. Two pieces of cord must be tied 2 inches apart.

- The cord is cut using a sterile blade or razor in a motion directed away from the mother’s skin to avoid injury.
- Cutting without tying can risk baby losing large volumes of blood.
- The presence of someone to assist the birthing attendant ensures the baby is not neglected after birth whilst mother is attended to.

**Step 9: Check placenta is intact**

- The mother waits for a contraction and delivers the placenta by pushing down.
- The placenta and membranes are carefully checked to ensure they are complete.
- The edges should be smooth, not ragged.
- This reduces the chance of infection and excessive bleeding/haemorrhage.

**Step 10: Check uterus is contracted**

- Check the mother’s uterus has contracted by gently feeling above the pubic bone.
- The belly should feel firm not spongy.
- This is more important in mothers with more than three children where the risk of haemorrhage is higher.
- Bonding of mother and baby is important.
- Breast feeding stimulates the baby and encourages the mother to release oxytocin. This increase uterus contraction and helps prevent excessive bleeding.