



Clinical Practice Procedures: Obstetrics/Nuchal umbilical cord

Policy code	CPP_OB_NC_0221
Date	February, 2021
Purpose	To ensure a consistent procedural approach for nuchal umbilical cord.
Scope	Applies to Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) clinical staff.
Health care setting	Pre-hospital assessment and treatment.
Population	Applies to all ages unless stated otherwise.
Source of funding	Internal – 100%
Author	Clinical Quality & Patient Safety Unit, QAS
Review date	February, 2024
Information security	UNCLASSIFIED – Queensland Government Information Security Classification Framework.
URL	https://ambulance.qld.gov.au/clinical.html

While the QAS has attempted to contact all copyright owners, this has not always been possible. The QAS would welcome notification from any copyright holder who has been omitted or incorrectly acknowledged.

All feedback and suggestions are welcome. Please forward to: Clinical.Guidelines@ambulance.qld.gov.au

Disclaimer

The Digital Clinical Practice Manual is expressly intended for use by appropriately qualified QAS clinicians when performing duties and delivering ambulance services for, and on behalf of, the QAS.

The QAS disclaims, to the maximum extent permitted by law, all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages and costs incurred for any reason associated with the use of this manual, including the materials within or referred to throughout this document being in any way inaccurate, out of context, incomplete or unavailable.

© State of Queensland (Queensland Ambulance Service) 2021.



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives V4.0 International License

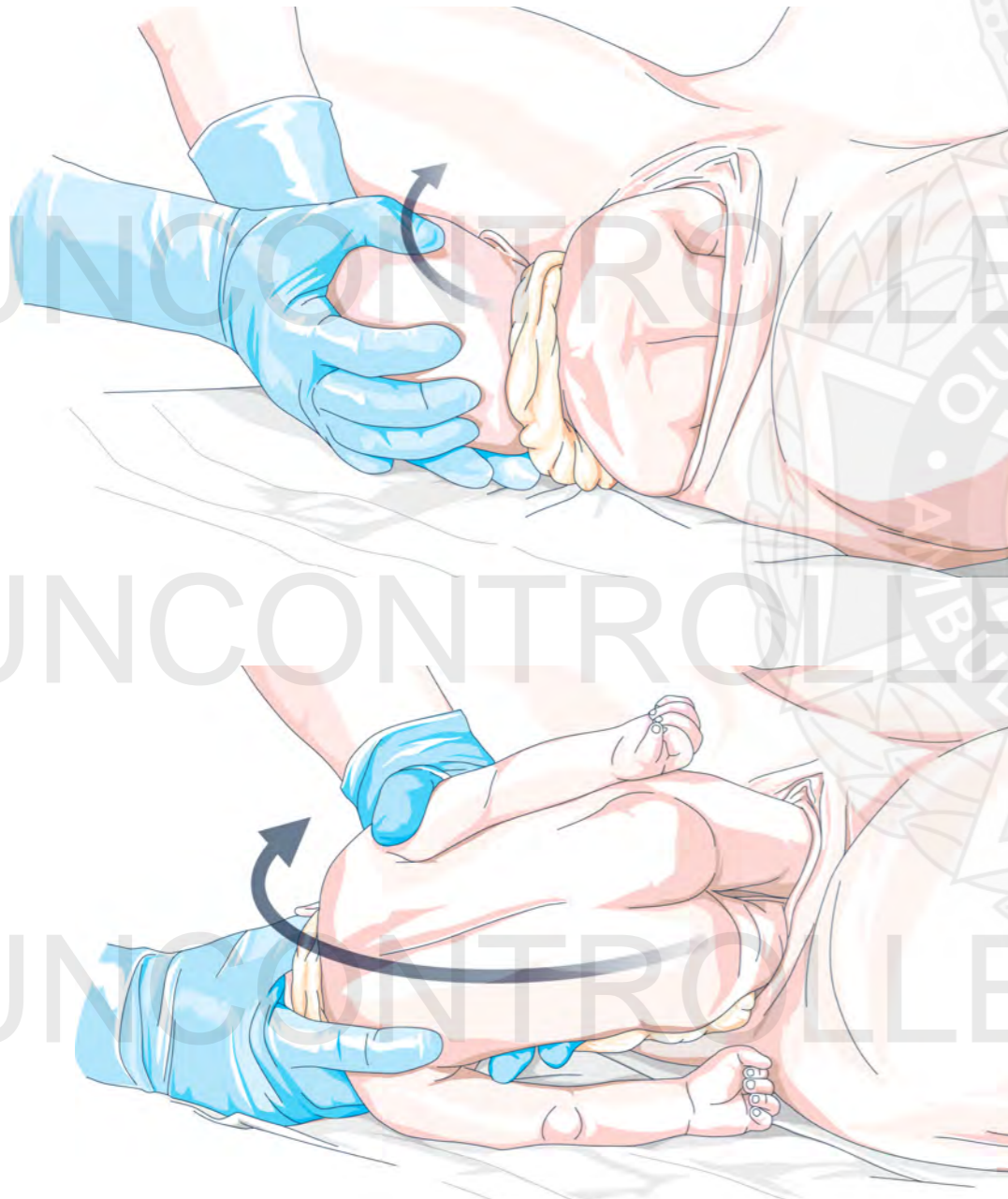
You are free to copy and communicate the work in its current form for non-commercial purposes, as long as you attribute the State of Queensland, Queensland Ambulance Service and comply with the licence terms. If you alter the work, you may not share or distribute the modified work. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.en>

For copyright permissions beyond the scope of this license please contact: Clinical.Guidelines@ambulance.qld.gov.au

Nuchal umbilical cord

February, 2021

Nuchal cord occurs in 15% to 34% of births,^[1] and most babies will deliver without incident. Clamping and cutting the umbilical cord prior to delivery of the neonate should be avoided and only be considered as a last resort.



Indications



- Umbilical cord wrapped around the neonate's head

Contraindications



- Nil

Complications

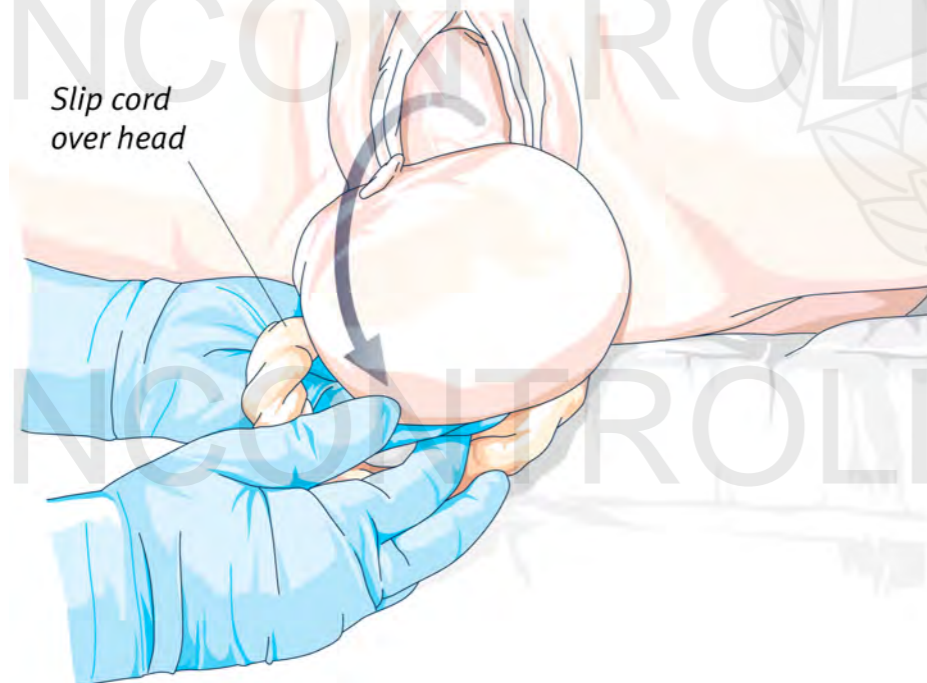
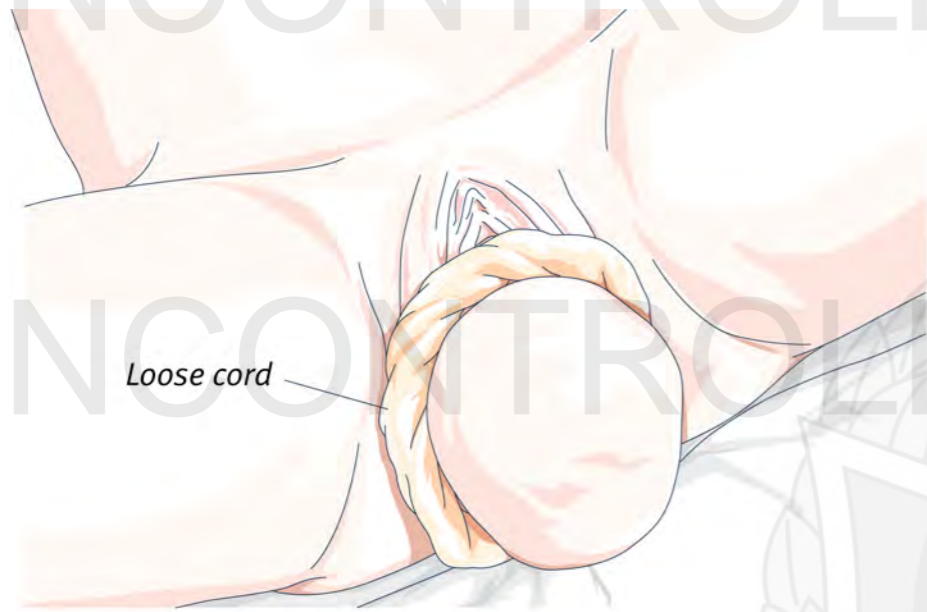


- hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy
- cerebral palsy^[2]

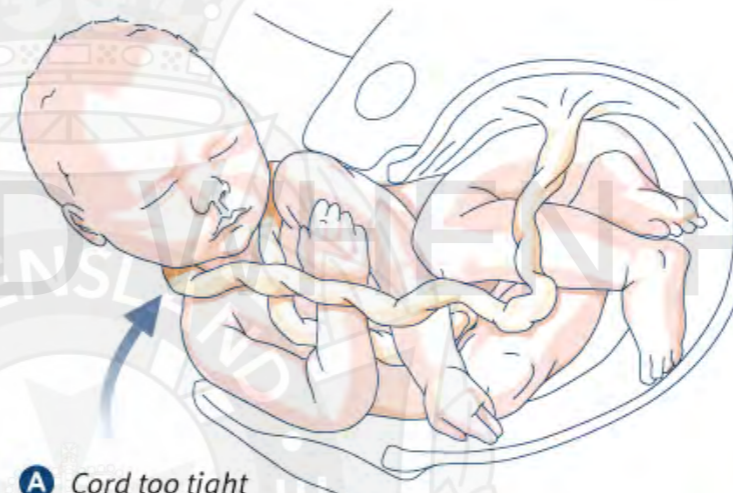
Procedure – Nuchal umbilical cord

The essential element for the management of a nuchal cord (cord around the neonate's neck) is avoiding the early clamping or cutting the cord, before the neonate's body is delivered:

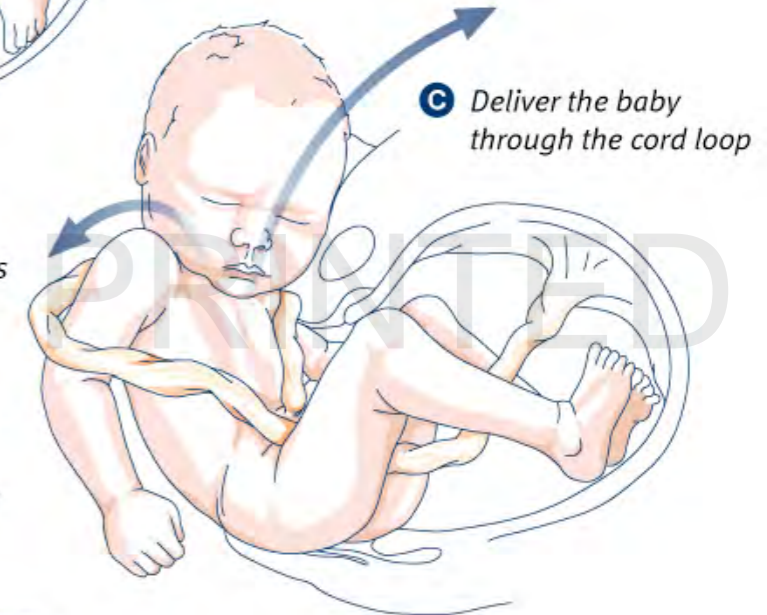
1. **If the cord is loose**, slip it over the head (cord reduction).^[1]



2. **If the cord is too tight to slip over the baby's head but not tight around the neck**, slip it over the shoulders as the baby's body is born and deliver the baby through the cord loop.



B Slip cord over baby's shoulders



D Continued delivery of the baby through the cord loop

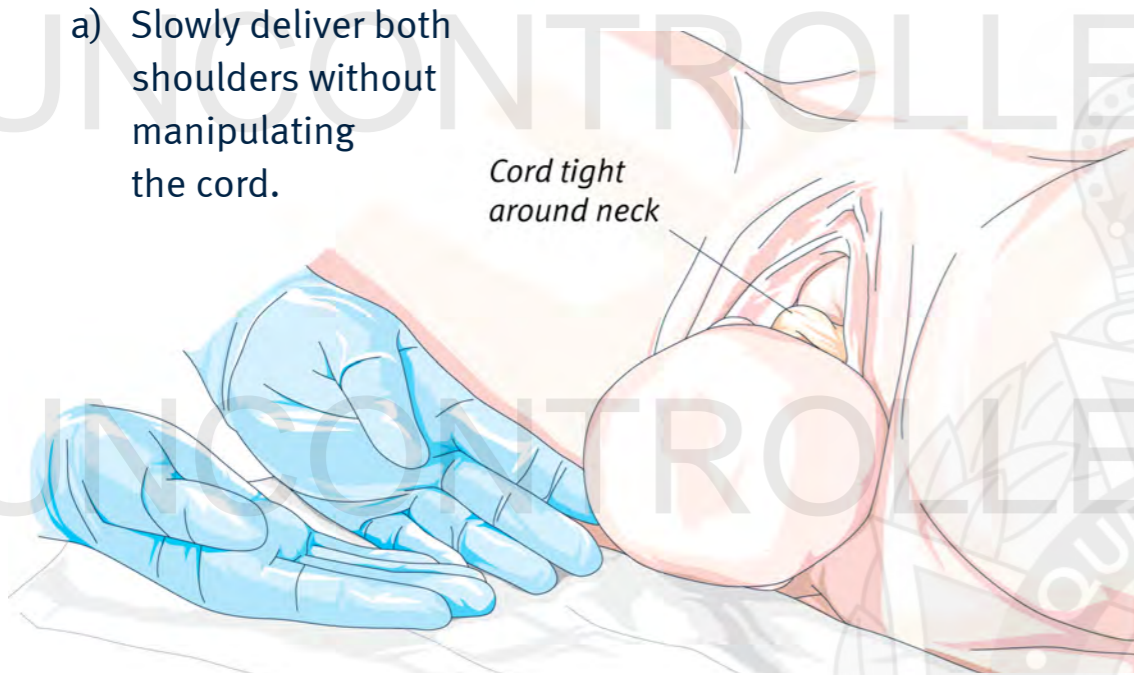


Procedure – Nuchal umbilical cord

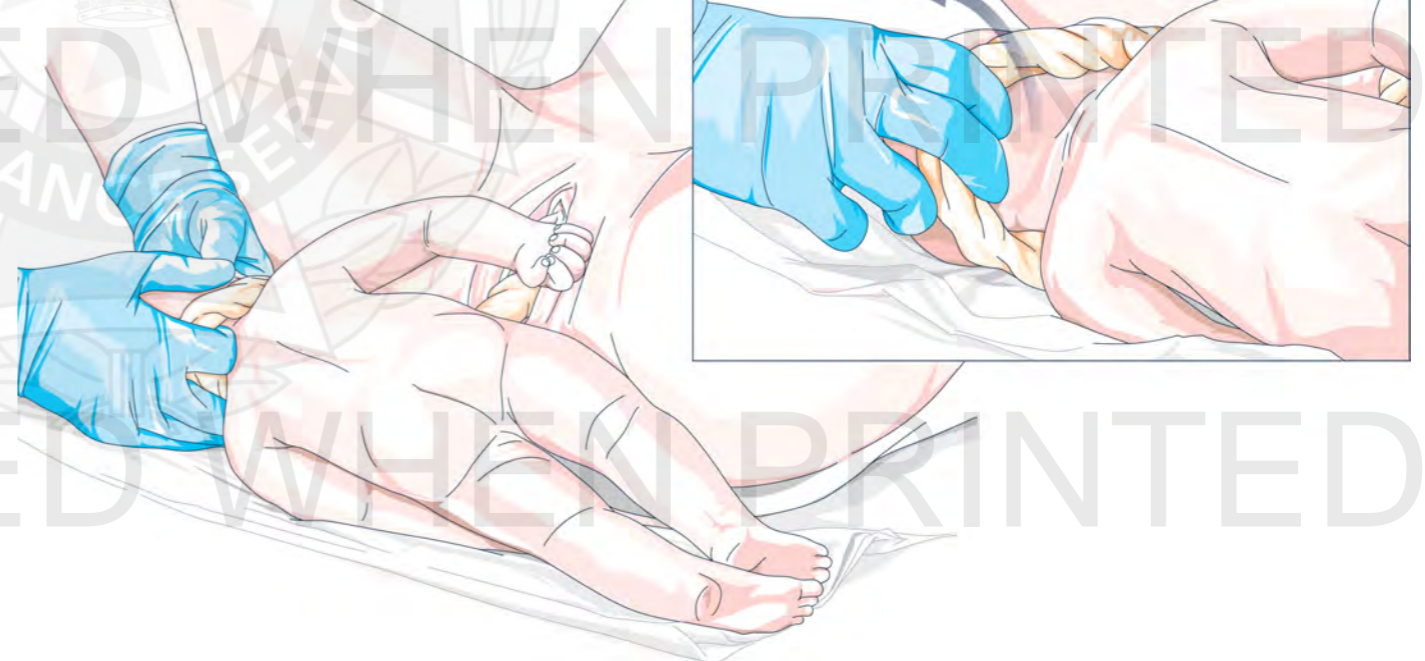
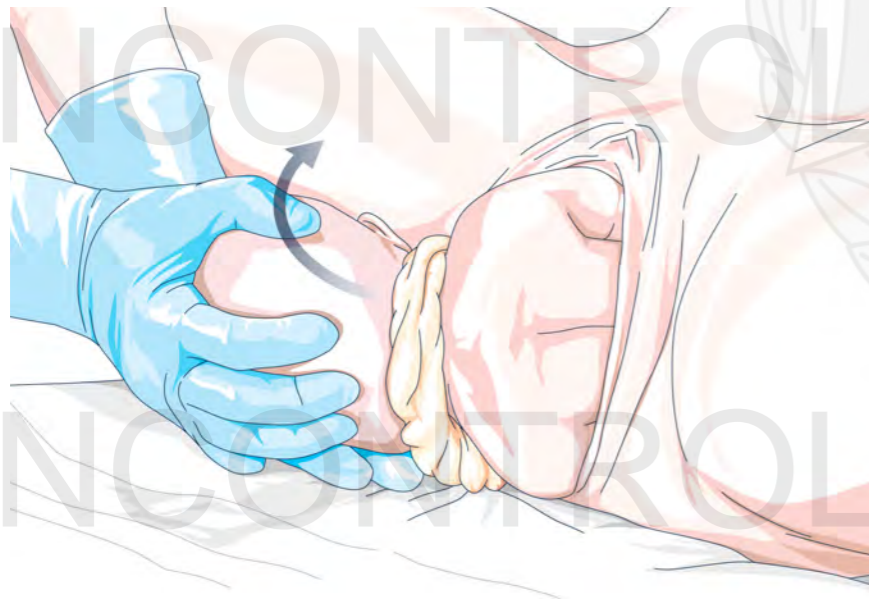
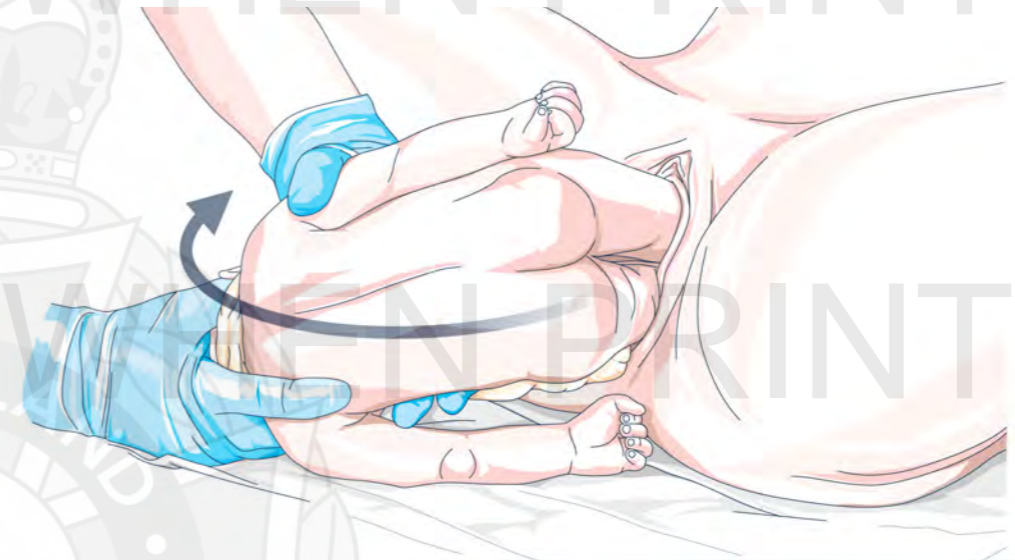
3. If the cord is too tight to slip back over the shoulders, but has a little give to it, somersault the baby out, as follows:

- a) Slowly deliver both shoulders without manipulating the cord.

Cord tight around neck



- c) Deliver the baby's body flexing torso gently and somersaulting out.



- b) As the shoulders are delivered, flex the baby's head so the face is pushed toward the mother's thigh.

- d) Loosen the cord and commence newly born assessment and cares.