



FAQ's on Bengkung Belly Binding.

How long do I wear the bind for?

Traditionally, a Bengkung bind is worn for 40 days, during the postpartum confinement period. For best results, you should continue to bind daily for a full 40 days. You will already experience benefits within 14 days. The first 10 days it's recommended to wear the bind 12-24 hours especially when you are resting in bed during the day. After 10 days you can wear your bind for 6-12 hours preferably at night.

How is Bengkung Belly Binding different from an elastic postpartum Belly Band?

Bengkung is 100% custom to your body every single time you wear it. In comparison, a mass-produced bind is only semi-customizable. It's the difference between buying a pair of jeans of the shelf at H&M (a mass-produced bind) vs having a tailor make you a brand new pair of jeans every single day. A Bengkung Belly Bind is also made of 100% cotton fabric, which makes it far more comfortable to wear than a mass-produced bind. I use different Bengkung Belly Binds, all home made and very comfortable.

How does Bengkung Belly Binding work?

A mother's body produces a hormone called relaxin during pregnancy, which helps her body open to accommodate a growing baby and childbirth. After birth, mom's body continues to produce relaxin which helps heal her body. Belly Binding is thought to work by supporting the natural healing process of closing after birth. It helps the uterus and internal organs find it's pre-pregnancy place in your abdomen. It helps in posture and lower back issues. Wearing a Bengkung Belly Bind diminishes pelvic instability and closes the hip bones. Belly Binding is also very beneficial for warming the abdomen and support blood flow.

How soon postpartum can I start with Bengkung Belly Binding?

You can start Belly Binding between days 4 and 7 postpartum after a vaginal birth, but any time in the first 2-3 weeks is ideal. After a c-section, moms are advised to wait until the initial healing process has begun (usually at least 2 weeks postpartum). We will work with you the moment you are comfortable binding. No need to rush things!

I need to add that in some cases I have started Belly Binding in the first week after a c-section in collaboration with the midwife and with a slightly different technique to avoid pressure on the wound.

What if I'm more than 40 days postpartum?

A mothers body produces relaxin for about three months postpartum (during the "4th trimester"). Binding any time during this period can be effective. After three months, binding's physical benefits are purely experimental (instead of based on generations of

traditions), but some women report good results. Many women choose to bind after 3 months for emotional/self-care reasons as well. If you choose to bind after 3 months postpartum, we recommend you add abdominal exercises to your daily routine to help strengthen your core while binding.

Will I loose muscle tone or get a prolapse while wearing a Belly Bind?

A woman with a severe prolapse will find any Belly Binding to be very uncomfortable. She'll feel a heaviness in her legs almost immediately. No need to worry about binding someone who shouldn't be bound because she'll know right away that it's not for her. When we say "Belly Binding", many midwives, maternity nurses and physiotherapists think of women who wear a belly bandit or shapewear for weeks or months at end, all day long. This will cause serious long term pelvic floor damage and prevent women from mentally reconnecting with their abdominal muscles, thus weakening those muscles. That's not what we're doing here! A 7-10 day Bind that feels good to her, mostly worn at night, including her hips in the Bengkung Bind, isn't going to cause these same problems in just a few days. There will be some increased downward pressure, but think of it like crutches and a cast. If you broke your leg, you'd wear a cast and use crutches temporarily. During that time you'd experience some muscle loss and stiffness but it would also help you heal faster. If you continued wearing that cast for too long and using those crutches for too long you would get weaker and weaker. The same is true with Belly Binding. The way we do it is beneficial for a short time. Continued for longer than 4 months only in the daytime and the risks outweigh the benefits. So yes there are risks, but when done starting at the hips to minimize downward pressure and only as a temporary tool in the resting postpartum period, it is safe so long as it feels comfortable for the mother.

How do I go to the bathroom while wearing the Belly Bind?

I recommend having the belly bind wrapped beneath all of your clothes for the best fit and most comfort and convenience. The most effective belly bind stretches from just below your bust to about mid-hip, near your pelvic bone. For modesty's sake (and because of heavy postpartum flow) you'll want to wear whatever underwear (mesh, etc.) while binding. It is still easy enough to pull your underwear out from under the bind the first time you use the bathroom and when you're finished, simply pull them up over the bind or tuck them back underneath.

My Belly Bind bunches, rolls or moves during the day. How can I keep it from doing that?

The belly bind moves because you move! Realize, the cultures that do this also practice confinement, which is a period after birth where the woman remains in bed the majority of the time. If you are up and moving postpartum, the belly bind is going to shift, bunch, and roll. The only way to prevent this is to move less. Part of what belly binding does is encourage you to be down and resting.

Are there any risks with Bengkung binding?

Binding is generally considered fairly safe. However, it can increase lochia flow. Women who are already at risk for hemorrhage will want to be extra aware in the first few days of binding (and may consider waiting until after 7 days postpartum). Binding after 3 months can weaken abdominal muscles, which is why gentle abdominal exercises are recommended when wearing longer than 3 months.

Do I need to have a partner help me bind?

No, not necessarily. Best results are absolutely seen with a partner, who can help you get the bind tight. However, since most women don't have in-home support 24 hours a day, having someone to help isn't always possible. Mirjam can teach you how to bind on your own as well as with a partner.

Does binding actually work?

YES! Women's bodies vary, but women who bind consistently see significant healing.

Can the belly bind be useful during pregnancy. Can you tell me more about that?

During pregnancy the hormone Relaxin works to loosen up all our joints in preparation for birth. This enables the baby to move more easily through the normally rigid pelvic area, as it allows bones and joints a greater range of movement. Unfortunately this can also result in greater discomfort during pregnancy when the pubic bone begins to separate. Sitting, laying down, and normal day-to-day movements sometimes become painful or even impossible. The bind can be tied short, giving support to your growing belly as well as your hips and pelvic/pubis bones. It is easier, however, to simply use a scarf, short baby wrap, or rebozo to wrap the hips, rather than have someone come bind you every day. (Please note: misuse of the belly bind during pregnancy without support from a professional can lead to restricted fetal growth and worsened pain, and is not advised).

Is it necessary to do bodywork before putting the Belly Bind on?

From my website you can read I prepare your abdomen before we bind you. Abdominal massage and lymphatic drainage before binding has numerous advantages, as we make sure the organs find the right location and position to prevent any issues from a misaligned uterus later on in life. It is certainly possible to learn this yourself and when you are not in Amsterdam and still like to book 1 session I will teach you how you can prepare your belly for self binding with the Bengkung.

Can I still Belly Bind if I have a miscarriage or still-birth?

You can still receive belly binding if either of these situations occurs, and in fact, the belly bind will speed your emotional as well as physical healing. Contact me for special bereavement pricing.

I don't live in Amsterdam. Can you still help me?

Yes! If you live further than 30 minutes (by car) from my practice we can arrange a meeting for one session. I can either teach your partner or yourself how to do a daily Bengkung Belly Bind. You still need to pay me the deposit and send me back the bind after a maximum of 4 months. A single 2-hour session with practicing self binding and me binding you, will be €150,- (travel costs & deposit not included). You can spice up your session with an extra moxa treatment, abdominal castor oil wrap and a vaginal steam if you like to experience these benefits for healing.

I can also suggest another Bengkung Belly Bind Professional near you, as I have trained about 10 women all over the Netherlands I trust you to.

Where did Mirjam Heemskerk train to be a professional Bengkung Belly Binder?

I first learned to bind postpartum women in Bengkung Style through the Sacred Pregnancy program by Anni Daulter. This set me of to offer Bengkung Belly Binding in the Nourishing New Mama Plan and in private sessions. Throughout the years I noticed that for some women this particular way of binding was not enough. Some body types ask for a more solid way of binding. I came across BreeAnn Moore from Positive Birth Learning Center. She does beautiful online trainings for professionals and postpartum mothers.

Would you like to learn yourself? Mirjam provides Bengkung Belly Bind Workshops in Amsterdam. These workshops are for Birth Professionals, such as midwives, doula's, maternity nurses or anyone working with postparum mums.

An online Training by BreeAnn Moore is another possiibility. Use these links for her programme!

[Self Binding for Postpartum Women](#)

[Belly Binding for Birth Professionals](#)

[Belly Binding Class Bundle](#)

Here's what my clients shared about Bengkung Belly Binding:

"I had the belly binding done 5 days postpartum and what a huge difference I felt in my back and sides, not to mention the next morning my belly swelling was down significantly and I felt a huge relief in my back." ~Emma, 1st baby

"Mirjam came to my house for 3 sessions and made such a difference in my recovery! The abdominal massage and lymph drainage helped me to relax and feel nourished. The Belly Bind was wonderful! It gave me so much support in my back. My belly pouch also diminished significantly day after day! I am happy I booked this for myself!" ~Nadine, 3rd baby

*last updated 5th of January 2019