outcome, and cord blood analysis may prove to be important both clinically and medicolegally. Professional guidelines recommend that a clamped cord can be left for up to one hour at room temperature before being sampled for blood gas analysis. This is likely to produce reliable pH results if the blood is isolated from the placenta, but we show here that lactate and base excess results should not be considered reliable under these circumstances. Future guidance should also stress clearly that delayed sampling of cord blood that has not been isolated from the placenta by a clamp is unreliable for all variables.

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