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# Vampire's Guide

*To the Care and Maintenance of a Human Being*



Edward A. Cullen

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## *To the Care and Maintenance of a Human Being*

### I. Introduction & Rationale

For most readers of this guide, the obvious question arises: Why would a vampire *ever* wish to keep company with a human? I will be perfectly candid and answer that most would not. It is a rare vampire who can tolerate close proximity to a human and should one manage to do so, it is an even rarer vampire who would not end up destroying said human.

I am that rare vampire. Like others of my kind, I once would have scoffed at the suggestion that I might be intimate enough with a human to require knowledge of its survival, much less its maintenance—that is, until I met one unique human who attracted me almost against my will. Sometimes fate takes one by surprise.



This guide records the knowledge I have gained through the experience of choosing a human wife. It might be that another vampire finds him- or herself in a similar situation and would be served by my hard-won experience. One of the most difficult challenges of living in an interspecies family is the lack of information available to help one cope with ordinary (and not so ordinary) life circumstances that arise.

You might legitimately ask how a situation such as mine could occur. It is a fact of our existence that a suitable mate is not always available for every vampire who wishes to find one. Humans are much more abundant than vampires, and some individuals might discover that their nature allows them to tolerate a close association with what most vampires consider to be merely prey. Such individuals are likely to be of the “vegetarian” persuasion, meaning that they survive on animal blood alone. It is only by foregoing human blood for many years that one can develop a tolerance for living close enough to a human to choose one as a mate.

Vampires have also been known to desire a lover, or even more than one lover. Because of our tendency to live in isolation, the probability of finding a vampire companion is quite small for most of our kind. Due to this state of affairs, one might choose to couple

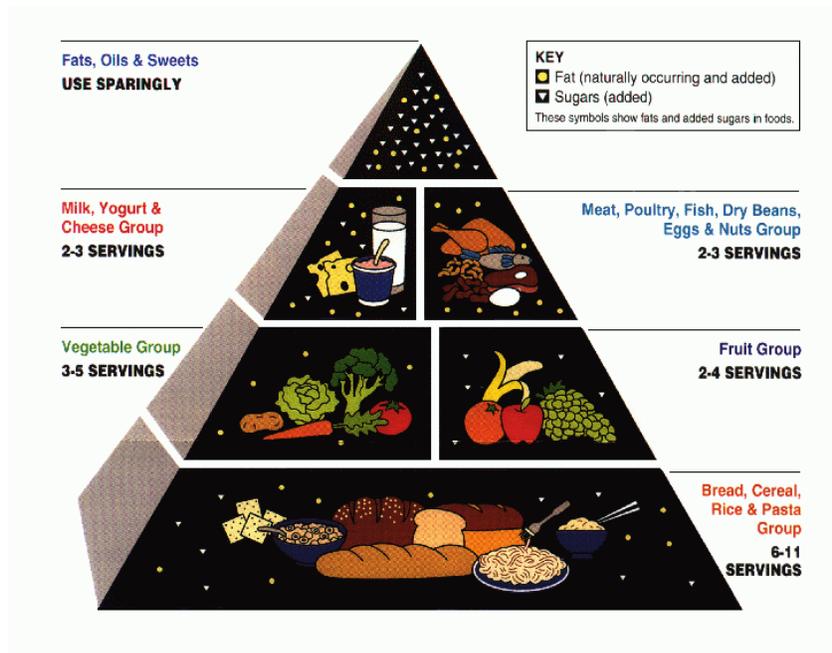
with the more abundant species. Though one can change a human to create a vampire mate, it is a feat that few among us can reliably perform.

## II. Diet and Nutrition

The first puzzle of liaising with a human is “What do they eat?” For us, the answer to that question is singular and obvious, but not for a human. Their dietary requirements are numerous and complex.

### Multiple Food Groups!

Humans require a variety of foods to maintain good health. In the United States, dietary requirements are depicted by a pyramid of food categories that should be consumed each day (or balanced out over the course of a week). The relative size of each layer of the pyramid delineates the amount of food from that category a human should eat to support a healthy constitution. One good rule of thumb to follow is that the more colorful a food is (in its natural state), the more nutrition it provides.



As indicated in the figure,<sup>1</sup> the most preferential foods are the grains, vegetables, and fruit, which together should provide the bulk of a human’s diet. Protein and calcium sources must also be consumed, but in smaller amounts. And yes, most humans who can afford it, do eat animal flesh and animal products (like milk and eggs) on a regular basis, as foul as that prospect might seem to us. Interestingly, humans of the British Isles consume animal blood, though they cook it into an unappetizing brown lump

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<sup>1</sup> Courtesy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

before eating it. Though rare, there are also some tribal natives who traditionally have consumed human blood as we do, in its natural state.



Humans must eat *several times a day* (generally two to five). Though they can survive longer periods without eating, the experience is unpleasant for them and, over the long term, can lead to poor health and early demise.

Should a valued human begin to prefer one food source over all others or show a marked change in diet, one

should suspect illness, or in cases where it is a possibility, pregnancy, and take appropriate action.

As you can see, human food requirements are complicated and troublesome, and in this respect, are indicative of many aspects of human existence. If you find their nutrition concerning, you might consider whether embarking on this path is really for you. A human's diet is but one small part of what is required to keep it alive.

### Human Thirst

A human can survive without food for relatively long periods (though at risk to its healthy), but it cannot survive long without sufficient hydration. Human bodies are made of mostly water, replaced on a

They are advised by subject to drink the oz. glasses of water or or to consume an from their food vegetables are high in as vitamins and necessary for a in larger amounts, it higher fluid intake.



which must be continual basis.

authorities on the equivalent of eight, 8- other liquids per day, equivalent amount sources. Fruits and water content, as well minerals. Salt intake is human's survival, but must be balanced by

### III. Care and Handling

Caring for a human is a multi-faceted endeavor and one could expound on its intricacies practically forever. For our purposes, I will limit myself to a few important categories of physical vulnerability particular to our association with them, and in which I have acquired personal experience.

#### Blood<sup>2</sup>

Here is the real stickler: In order to keep a human being alive, you must not drink its blood. Though obvious, one must take this fact into careful account before attempting any close affiliation with a human. One should never underestimate the challenge of conquering one's bloodlust. Only great incentive and self-control will safeguard the human's life, but neither of these things guarantees it.



Most vampires will stop reading at this point, finding such a requirement to be impossible (or even undesirable). Let me assure you that it is not impossible, but it is *extremely* difficult. It becomes less difficult the longer one refrains from tasting human blood by relying solely on the blood of animals for sustenance. Also, one does become somewhat desensitized to the scent of a particular human's blood when exposed to it continually. The self-control required to avoid draining the human is never something that can be taken for granted, however, and consorting with a blood-filled creature is not something to be undertaken lightly.

Some might consider it possible to *taste* their human's blood occasionally under highly controlled circumstances. Though it is exceedingly dangerous to encourage one's cravings in this way, it is possible to taste the human's blood through indirect means. The blood must be collected from, or shed by, the human, and not taken directly, since a vampire's venom, once absorbed into the human's bloodstream, will change the human irrevocably.

Note that should a human be bitten, it is possible, though extraordinarily difficult, to suck the venom out of the human's bloodstream and, thus, prevent and otherwise certain change from occurring. Let it be said that one should never bite a human with the idea that one would then extract the venom from its bloodstream because there is no certainty—in fact, it is highly unlikely—that one will be able to stop drinking should one start.

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<sup>2</sup> Human blood is the number one impediment to a vampire's ability to preserve the life of a human.

## Sleep

A human *must* spend one-third of every day sleeping in order to maintain its mental and physical health. This is another obvious point, but one that should be carefully considered. Should you desire a human companion to spend time with you, you must first accept the reality that approximately eight hours of each day is not theirs to give. The body requires those (preferably continuous) hours solely to recover and rejuvenate itself. If a human should try, or be expected, to refrain from sleeping at least this amount of time, it will go mad or experience serious physical breakdown and, eventually, death. Indeed, after a certain amount of sleep deprivation, there is no known way to keep a human awake without killing it, the need is so vital.

That is not to say that a human should sleep much more than eight hours a day (or ten for teenagers, more for small children and infants). Excessive sleeping, defined here as more than ten hours a day for an adult is likely a sign of disease or mental instability (depression). Either of these causes should be addressed expeditiously. Neither should a human frequently drop off to sleep while sitting, talking, or doing other things. This is a sign of hidden respiratory problems, a serious sleep disturbance, or severe sleep deprivation. (It might also be a symptom of pregnancy.)

One confusing aspect of sleep is to distinguish it from unconsciousness. The former is a natural, healthful state, while the latter is a sign of serious distress.

Typically, unconsciousness occurs suddenly and is indicated by a rapid descent into a sleep-like state while otherwise not relaxing. Unlike a sleeping human, an unconscious one cannot be readily awakened, but will “come to” when their brain deems it safe to do so. Unconsciousness can occur for any number of reasons including dehydration, hunger, stress, intoxication, brain injury, shock, blood sugar irregularities, or insufficient oxygen intake.

In any event, an episode of more than brief unconsciousness due to an obvious stressor should be evaluated by a human doctor immediately and appropriate steps taken. It could signal a life-threatening problem. This is particularly true of head injuries and blood sugar anomalies.



## Skin

The skin of the human being is the largest organ of its body, and as the outermost protective layer, it is prone to injury. Compared to the skin of the vampire, human skin is delicate and must be handled with great care.

The most common form of injury, bruising, occurs when one does not exercise enough caution in touching or moving about near the human.

A bruise (*contusion*) occurs when the skin is squeezed or struck hard enough to break blood-carrying vessels beneath the surface of the skin that subsequently leak blood and cause dark marks.



The photo illustrates what happens when you grab a human with too much force. The bruise in the photo silhouettes the fingers of an assaulting hand. The bruise is new and starting to turn pink. It will darken to blue or purple before it begins to heal and turns to a yellowish green.

With our great strength and sturdy bodies, it is almost inevitable that we will inflict bruises on our humans, though we must attempt to handle them gently enough to avoid it. A bruise is a relatively minor injury and heals rapidly, but it is painful to the human and can be an indicator of problems, either with the vampire's control or the human's state of health, or both.



A human, particularly a female of child-bearing age, will bruise easily if she is deficient in the mineral iron. In such cases, she can be given iron supplementation. A human can suffer serious consequences, including death, from iron deficiency if it is not addressed.

Also take note that one can be arrested by the human authorities for producing bruises on your human, as it is a common sign of abuse or assault between humans. Be wary of your strength and of any situation where you might lose control of it. Physically consorting with a human is one such risky situation.

Another common skin injury in humans is called *sunburn*. While we sparkle in the sunshine, white-skinned humans turn beautiful shades of pink to fuchsia. Darker-skinned humans darken further and may take on a tinge of redness, though in general, they are less susceptible to sunburn. The woman in the picture is suffering a moderate to high level of pain, much as you would if burned by a lit candle or other flame. There are palliatives for the pain, but there is no cure except time. The best solution is to avoid sunburn by being sure the human is slathered in sun-blocking cream whenever its skin is exposed to the sun for more than ten or fifteen minutes at a time. Covering or shading the skin with hats and clothing also prevents sunburn. Note that repeated sunburn can lead to a deadly skin disease (*melanoma*) in a human.

### Bones

Human bones are fragile, like twigs, and are easy to snap. It is quite painful to the human and, unbelievably, human bones take six to eight weeks to mend. Breaking the bones of the skull can be deadly. Be careful.



### IV. Doom, Death, & Disease

As a human being, there are an infinite number of routes to death. I'll only mention a few here, those that are universal, and those that have been of particular concern to me. You might wish to research the topic further.

### Aging

It is important to remember that human beings grow old, deteriorate, and die as a matter of course. Companionship or partnership with a human, therefore, must be considered a temporary arrangement. Should you wish for a longer-term commitment, when or whether to change the human should be considered.



Should one choose to change a human, it is customary, though not required, to do so while the human is relatively young. Though vampires of all ages are physically beautiful, most would prefer to spend eternity in a young-appearing body. If one finds or selects a human companion that is older, note that changing it will correct any infirmities or physical deformities due to

age, but will not render it young-looking again. There is one benefit of changing an older human; that is, the new vampire will not need to relocate as often as it would if it looks quite young, as younger humans must appear to age and those changes occur faster from approximately the late teens to the early thirties, than later in life.

### **Accidents**

It can be difficult to remember that, though it is nearly impossible for vampires to die, humans die with great ease and from many different causes. Accidents are foremost among those causes. I will mention two categories of accidents that I have personal knowledge of, though there are numerous others.

A human that falls (or jumps) from a great height onto a hard surface is bound to suffer severe injuries and may die due to blood loss, or due to brain damage and complete system failure. Human balance is defective and, thus, falling is a common occurrence. A human might also jump from a great height to bring about its death prematurely.

Vehicle collisions or crashes are another common cause of human death, as evidenced by the many religious markers and altars along highways where human deaths have occurred. Because humans do not have our superior reflexes and concentration, driving at speeds faster than 30 miles per hour or so, results in deadly crashes when the human makes errors of judgment or loses control of the vehicle.

Note that death is much more likely for humans who ride two-wheeled vehicles, especially motorcycles. Driving helmets are highly recommended for any two-wheeled locomotion to prevent brain damage from collisions or crashes. Many humans consider it to be only a matter of time before those who ride motorcycles are killed by doing so.

### **Itinerant threats**

A vampire with a valued human must always keep in mind the threat that is posed to the human by other vampires. Unless one's friends or acquaintances are highly controlled individuals, it is recommended that one avoid bringing the human into close proximity with one's peers.

Nomads are another consideration. Vampires who travel through one's area may have no understanding of one's desire to preserve the life of a particular human and might even target your human for death. It is good to maintain an awareness of other vampires that might come into contact with your valued human being.

Human-eating animals are also a threat to a human's life. Though occurrences are rare, humans can be dispatched easily by any number of creatures, such as bears, wolves, sharks, large felines and reptiles, to name a few. As the millennia pass, this type of

threat becomes less common, as humans are depleting the earth of large animals, species by species.

While large carnivores still exist, however, it is when in their habitats. Large predators are forested or wild areas, or in medium (alligators, snakes) or large (sharks, killer whales) bodies of

Note that a human being can die from being *any* size of creature (or even plant!) that either by being overcome by the amount of (snakes) or simply by being allergic to it (bees,



best to be on guard generally found in crocodiles, large water.

stung or bitten by produces venom, deadly poison spiders).

### Acts of God

Even such harmless threats as weather can easily kill a human. Humans must be protected at all times from exposure to extreme weather events, such as lightening, tornadoes (high winds), and hurricanes.



Other acts of God that kill millions of humans include earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunamis. Keep in mind that such simple occurrences as high or low temperatures will also kill a warm-blooded creature such as a human being. They must be protected from excessive cold and excessive heat, as well as prolonged wetness and direct exposure to a vampire's body, both of which can result in too much heat loss.

### Ways to Die

Though a human death can be instigated any number of ways, the final event always results from the same cause: the ceasing of the heart muscle to beat (*cardiac arrest* or *heart attack*). When the heart stops, blood fails to pump through the human's body, and cells receive insufficient or no oxygen, causing massive cell death. When a critical mass of cells die, the organism itself dies.

One of the most common ways for a human to die is by excessive blood loss. This occurs either through visible bleeding of a wound or injury, or invisible bleeding inside the

body's cavity. Once the volume of blood flowing through the human's body drops to a critical point, there is no longer enough blood carrying oxygen to the brain, whose cells begin to die. Because the brain controls the signals directing the heart to beat, brain death is followed shortly thereafter by the death of the heart muscle, and death of the human.



Blood loss, of a sort, also occurs when a human develops a cancerous growth. The cancer consumes more and more of the oxygen and nutrients in the circulating blood, leaving an insufficient supply for the rest of the body, and it expels the waste products of its accelerated growth into the blood, deoxygenating it.

Another way to stop the heart is by poison, a substance that arrests one or more vital functions of the body, including the intake of oxygen, the pumping of the heart muscle, or the elimination of waste products from the blood. Note that many harmless substances become poisonous if ingested in large quantities. Poisons can include chemical compounds, either natural or synthetic, heavy metals, and even biological organisms originating from spoiled food, human waste, or fetid water.

Brain injury can also cause human death. The brain directs the heart to beat, so if the brain is damaged enough, it will stop regulating the heartbeat. The brain can be severely damaged in many ways, including blood vessels bursting in the brain (*stroke*), blockage of a vital blood vessel in or to the brain (*thrombosis*), accidental injury, or a malignant tumor.

Severe electrical shock can disrupt the heart's pumping rhythm and cause death. Surprisingly, controlled shock can also restore an arrhythmic or arrested heartbeat.

Finally, it is relevant to mention the vampire's bite. There are two possible effects of any vampire bite to a human. First, the bite can result in excessive blood loss to the human's body and cause death directly. Second, should a vampire's mouth venom come in contact with a human's circulating blood, it works as a poison, oxidizing (burning) each human cell in such a way as to render it impervious to natural death. In other words, all of the human's cells are converted to the immortal cells of a vampire. Thus, the human dies, but a vampire is created.

## V. Sex

**Warning!** Physical congress with a human being is not only possible (though rare), it can produce offspring! This is a fact that was previously unknown to the vampire community at large, though legends of vampire/human mating and hybrid children (called *dhampirs*, a Balkan term) resulting from such mating exist. Mating with a human carries a huge potential for undesirable results. It is particularly dangerous for the human partner in such a coupling.

Mating with a huge potential for results. It is dangerous for the such a coupling. weakness and human body injury, if not human.



human carries a undesirable particularly human partner in The intrinsic fragility of the almost guarantees death, to the

Mating with a the vampire in proximity to the human's body, and in particular, the human's heartbeat and blood. This proximity, combined with the reduced self-control present in mating behavior, significantly increases the probability that a vampire will bite the human. Biologically, humans are our prey and however far we may alter our lives from acting on that fact, the biological imperative remains a controlling force in our nature. In other words, the cards are stacked against a vampire who wishes to mate with a human and not drink its blood in the process.

human also places extremely close

### With Male

Both female and male vampires have enjoyed physical congress with human males with satisfactory results. Not only is it possible to have a sexual relationship with a human male, but there is no risk of pregnancy. Of course, the standard concern of accidentally killing the human through excessive application of force or by drinking its blood still applies.

The ancient legend of the *succubus*, a female creature who extracts semen from human men while they sleep, presents the possibility that vampires have been mating with human men for centuries. I am personally acquainted with a coven of female vampires who regularly seduce human males. Human men are abundant almost everywhere, while vampire men are not, and as a general rule, the humans are eager participants. It was my friends' practice for many decades to mate and then feed, but doing so depleted

the supply of men in the area, and precluded future opportunities. In time, they decided to satisfy themselves with just mating—an agreeable outcome all around.

### With Female

Male vampires mating with human females is another matter altogether. Their sexual congress can result in pregnancy, and to the best of our knowledge, no human female has ever survived carrying and birthing the child of such a union. If the gestation doesn't kill her, the birth certainly will.



Therefore, it is incumbent upon the vampire to ensure the use of birth control by the human female. Vampires carry no risk of either giving or getting sexually transmitted diseases, and condoms are not well-adapted to the vampire's skin (they slip off), so one must rely on feminine birth control methods.

Human birth control comes in different forms, including hormones (pill, shots, patches, or subcutaneous delivery), internal devices (IUDs), and barriers (the diaphragm, cervical cap, or sponge, or female condom). Studies have not been done to determine whether human spermicides are effective against vampire sperm. Until proven otherwise, they should be considered *ineffective*. Not relying on spermicides to “back up” the barrier methods renders these methods less effective and they are, therefore, not preferred.

It is also unknown whether an IUD can prevent conception. The dhampir fetus is much hardier than the human fetus, in many respects, and it might render the IUD ineffective. Therefore, I would strongly recommend that the human female use a hormone-based method of birth control. It could save her life.

For the sake of thoroughness, I will note that a female vampire coupling with a human female carries no risk of pregnancy, but still carries the intrinsic risks of the vampire's strength and natural affinity for blood. Note that any coupling with a human female during her menstrual cycle is extremely risky, as is coupling with a female virgin, as it is common for the human to bleed upon first (and sometimes subsequent) vaginal penetration.

## VI. Procreation

While vampires and humans are of different species, our 25 chromosomal pairs can combine with the human's 23 pairs in such a way as to enable sexual reproduction.<sup>3</sup> There are not enough documented dhampir children to state conclusively the nature of the offspring such a pregnancy might yield, though we know that it has 24 chromosomes. The fertility of the offspring is undetermined.

It is unknown if the probability of pregnancy in a vampire/human mating is less than that of human males with human females. Though the biology of reproduction is the same, the different number of chromosomes between the species *might* make pregnancy less likely, but this theory has not been tested, and it might make it more likely. Therefore, one must assume that the likelihood of pregnancy is high and take appropriate precautions.

### Pregnancy

We have observed only one case of a human female gestating a dhampir fetus to maturity, though we have direct knowledge of four more. Given only five known cases, this section is necessarily anecdotal, but for the purposes of this guide, we assume that the principles are universal.



It is not possible for a human mother to survive the gestation and delivery of a dhampir fetus. There are several reasons for this. First, a human diet does not provide sufficient nutrition to support the accelerated growth rate of the fetus. When a deficit occurs, the fetus begins to absorb whatever it needs directly from the mother's body, depleting her of nutrients until her body can no longer sustain its own life. The fetus requires oxygen, so it will die along with the mother if not delivered immediately. This tragic side effect can be mitigated somewhat by providing the human mother with the proper nutrition for a dhampir fetus.

The expectant mother will know instinctively when she must adapt her diet to support her fetus. The fetus demands the nutrients it requires from human blood and the mother, if made aware of what it wants, will crave blood and the mother, if made aware of what it wants, will crave blood to satisfy its needs. If not

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<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note that this is not unique to vampires and humans. Horses and donkeys have long been bred to produce mules (female horse/male donkey) and hinnies (female donkey/male horse). Likewise, different species of canis (dogs, wolves, jackals, coyotes) or panther (large cats) can also interbreed.

given blood, her body will cease to absorb nutrients from human food and she and the fetus will starve.

The vegetarian approach to feeding a growing dhampir fetus is to acquire donated human blood. This blood can be warmed and drunk directly or, possibly, administered as a transfusion. In the one observed gestation, the direct approach was the most expedient and the other was willing, so transfusion was never tried. It takes dozens of pints of blood to bring a dhampir fetus to term, so many donors are required.

The second reason a human mother does not survive the gestation of a dhampir fetus is that her body cannot withstand the natural growth rate and size of the hybrid progeny. The dhampir fetus develops at approximately 4.25 times the rate, and up to 1.3 times the size of a human fetus. Either of these differences can destroy the mother's body.

The accelerated rate of development outpaces the mother's ability to adapt quickly enough and results in injury. For example, the fetus will begin breaking the mother's bones due to limited space for it to grow. A broken rib can puncture the mother's heart or lungs, either of which can lead to death. A broken bone can also puncture one of the mother's internal organs, leading to internal blood loss or injury to a critical organ, either of which results in death. A broken spine will paralyze the mother from the point of the break downward, which does not necessarily kill her, but will render her crippled for what is left of her human life.

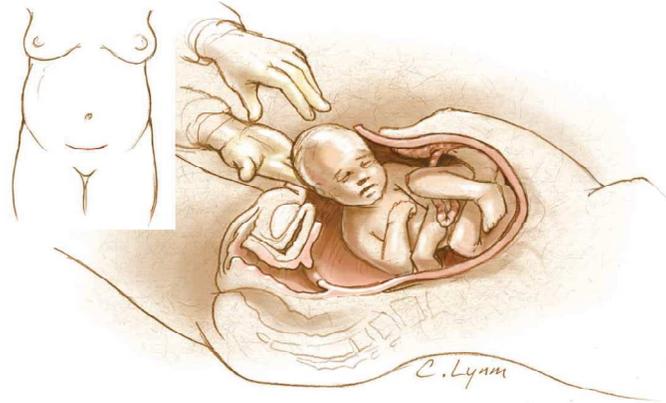
### **Childbirth**

The third reason a human mother has never survived the gestation of a dhampir fetus is the birth itself. When a human fetus grows too large to be accommodated, the mother's uterus begins contracting to push the baby out of her body. This is not possible the dhampir fetus because the membrane surrounding it is made of rock-solid, vampire-like skin. If the mother's muscles were strong enough to eject the baby in the usual way, the process would tear her body apart.

If left to its natural conclusion, we believe the dhampir's gestation ends when it has grown sufficiently to ensure its own survival. At that point, it must chew its way out of the mother's body, similar to how a bird pecks its way out of an eggshell. This process also results in death to the mother.

Theoretically, the only possible way to sustain the human mother's life is to deliver the child through Cesarean section before it injures her. In this case, a vampire adult must be present to tear open the birth membrane with his or her teeth, as there exists no other known material hard enough to pierce it. Of course, the mother's life is in further peril due to her bleeding during surgery. This blood loss will encourage the adult vampire to feed.

With this many routes to death and only one possible, very precarious, path to saving the mother's life, it is wise to consider the only remaining option: to change the mother just after delivering the child. If one can keep the mother's heart beating long enough for the vampire venom to circulate, the injuries to her body, though severe, can be healed through the transformation. That is how my wife survived the birth of our daughter. To the best of our knowledge, Isabella Swan Cullen is the only surviving mother of a dhampir child's birth.



We began the process of birthing our daughter when her mother's body was in imminent danger of death.<sup>4</sup> The technique I used was to remove the child by C-section, using my teeth to break through the protective membrane. A capable friend performed continuous CPR to keep my wife's heart pumping long after it would have failed on its own.

After extracting our baby, I used a long-needled syringe to inject my own venom, collected for that purpose, directly into her mother's heart muscle. This technique healed her heart and enabled it to complete the vampiric transformation, which healed the rest of her body's critical injuries. To accelerate the transformation, I bit into all of her major arteries to inject venom directly into her bloodstream and healed the wounds to keep the blood and the venom circulating until the transformation was complete.

Though this technique ultimately worked, resulting in the birth of a dhampir child to two vampire parents, it is impossible to overemphasize the danger of the procedure to the mother. She easily could have died before the transformation took hold. Thus was our daughter's birth a unique event. There is no guarantee that another mother would survive under the same circumstances.

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<sup>4</sup> In retrospect, we may have been able to start the delivery earlier, before the birth became an emergency. However, we didn't know, and still don't, the exact gestation period for a dhampir child.

My guess is that the odds of a human mother's survival as a human are a tiny fraction of one percent and that her surviving as a vampire is still less than five percent. The odds that the fetus will survive the mother's death are only slightly higher than that. Though my wife and I are ecstatic to have our daughter, I would have to advise that a vampire/human couple that conceives should consider early termination and remain childless, or investigate artificial insemination, or if the law eventually allows, consider adopting human children.<sup>5</sup>

## Childrearing

Children of a vampire father and a human mother are rare creatures. Only five such progeny are known to exist at present, four females and one male. This section is based upon anecdotal evidence supplied by these unique individuals.

### *What have we here?*

Creating a dhampir child is "like a box of chocolates," as one fictional character put it. "You never know what you're going to get."<sup>6</sup> We don't know the type or number of variations that might occur from the known exemplars.

Our daughter, Renesmee, is an exceptionally beautiful child with her mother's human eye color and her father's hair color. She has circulating blood, a higher-than-human body temperature, and a beating heart. As both an infant and child, she preferred a blood diet to a human diet, though her body tolerates both.

Renesmee's skin is paler than a human's, but less pale than a vampire's, and she has a human's rosy tint. Her skin glows slightly in the sun, but does not sparkle. She passes as human more easily than her vampire parents. While humans have 23 chromosomes and vampires have 25, Renesmee has 24, and in appearance and characteristics, has inherited from her parents equally.



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<sup>5</sup> Currently, it is not legal to marry a human unless the human is to be changed. Neither is it legal to adopt human children given the prohibition against revealing our existence to humans.

<sup>6</sup> The actual quotation is "Life is like a box of chocolates..." spoken by Forrest Gump in the motion picture of the same name.

Her growth rate is approximately three times that of a human child and we expect her to be fully grown at seven years of age. Along with her accelerated growth rate, Renesmee learns at a highly accelerated rate. Interestingly, she requires sleep like a human.



Nahuel,<sup>7</sup> the singular dhampir male, is approximately 150 years old, so we assume that dhampirs share longevity, if not immortality, with vampires. Neither Nahuel's mother, nor any of his half-sisters' mothers, survived their child's birth.

Physically, Nahuel inherited his light brown skin color and its texture from his human mother and he easily passes for human. Like Renesmee, Nahuel prefers to drink blood, but can also tolerate human food. Both his and Renesmee's strength and speed approach that of the vampire.



Interestingly, Nahuel is the only known dhampir who is venomous. Immediately after his birth, he bit his human aunt and changed her. Renesmee also bit her mother right after birth, but she is not venomous and neither are Nahuel's three sisters. It is unknown whether this distinction is gender-related or simply chance. Based on the biting behavior, it would seem that, like human babies, dhampirs are born with the instinct and ability to feed.

It must be noted that there may be many more dhampir children conceived than are ever born. The combining of their disparate number of chromosomes likely causes some to die in utero or to be miscarried during fetal development. Another possible result is that the child might be born, but serious deformities of unknown type. Judging by the results of other interspecies' couplings, a male child is likely to be infertile and a female child may or may not be. However, this issue has not yet been studied for dhampirs.

### ***Social Concerns***

A dhampir child must be taught at an early age how to coexist with the humans among whom it will live. If it hunts, it must be taught appropriate adult rules for such.

If our current examples are indicative, the child will reach adulthood in approximately seven years. The parents will be required to move frequently during these years, or keep the child at home, in order to hide the child's accelerated development from proximate humans. The expected lifespan of a dhampir is unknown, though it is at least 150 years and probably much longer. It is also unknown whether a dhampir can be changed to a

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<sup>7</sup> Photo © Roxann Arwen Mills

vampire, though emerging evidence suggests that vampire venom might be deadly poison to the dhampir.

The opportunity for a dhampir to find an appropriate mate may be limited. Revealing our nature to a human mate requires that the human be changed in order not to break vampire law. A dhampir might mate with a vampire if the vampire can tolerate its human blood. It is unknown whether a female dhampir and a male vampire could produce offspring.

### ***Legal Issues and Consequences***

Anyone versed in the history of the vampire knows of a time when it was fashionable to change human children and keep them as “progeny.” This practice was outlawed when it became obvious that vampire children never grow up intellectually or emotionally, and are subject to tantrums and other childish behaviors that cannot be controlled in the human world.

An emotionally and socially retarded being with the remarkable powers of the vampire is a potentially dangerous creature who cannot foresee or take into account the consequences of his or her actions. This causes it to readily expose their nature to those around them, endangering themselves and other vampires. It is for this reason that changing a child is illegal and is dealt with harshly by our arbiters of justice, the Volturi. Any vampire child that is discovered is summarily disposed of, along with its creator and any others who have succored it.



This poses a problem for dhampir children who look like baby vampires, but have accelerated, rather than frozen, development. Since dhampir children can (and must) be taught to accommodate themselves to their human society, they pose no serious threat of exposing the nature of themselves or others to the humans around them.

The Volturi recently recognized the existence of dhampir children and, having done so, are prepared to investigate the true nature of a child before destroying it. They have acknowledged that dhampir children are rare and valuable additions to our vampire society.

However, it is incumbent upon the parents of a dhampir child to circumvent any misunderstanding by informing the Volturi of its birth and, when it has grown sufficiently to travel, to present it to the Italian court. Not doing so could lead to tragic consequences for the child and its parents and friends.

