



Navelstring Charm

Date
1870-1875

Primary Maker
Kiowa

Medium
Hide, glass beads, tin cones, horse hair, sinew and cotton thread

Description

Plains mothers entrusted small beaded amulets to hold their baby’s dried umbilical cord, the precious life line between mother and child. Inside the amulet, the cord’s protective qualities warded off sickness and brought good luck to the child. Amulets were either attached to the child’s cradle or clothing. Beaded lizard and snake amulets were given to boys, while girls received beaded turtles such as this one.

Dimensions

Overall (Not including fringe): 8 × 3 in. (20.3 × 7.6 cm)