

# Kangaroo Care

Kangaroo Care is a special way to hold your baby for skin-to-skin contact. Your baby is placed on your bare chest wearing only a diaper and hat and will be covered with a warm blanket. The baby snuggles on your chest covered with a blanket, just like a kangaroo's pouch. That's why it's called Kangaroo Care or KC. Doctors say that holding a baby skin-to-skin is the "best care" for your baby.



## Why is Kangaroo Care the "best care" for Mom and Baby?

- Helps your baby move to the outside world easier because he can hear your heartbeat and feel your warmth.
- Helps to keep your baby warm.
- Helps baby maintain a good heart rate and breathing rate.
- Your baby will cry less and sleep more.
- Your baby can be held skin-to-skin during procedures.
- Your baby will have better brain development.
- Your baby may take the first feeding at your breast, which is the best care you can provide for your baby.
- You will have more milk and more success with breastfeeding.
- You will have better bonding and feelings of closeness.
- You will feel more confident caring for your baby.



## How do I do Kangaroo Care at birth?

- Immediately after birth, your baby will be dried off and placed on your chest.
- Both you and the baby will be covered with warm blankets.
- Your baby may take the first feeding at the breast.
- You and your baby may remain skin-to-skin for up to 2 hours.
- Do not hand the baby to family members or friends during this time as your baby will get cold.



# Questions about Kangaroo Care

## Can dad hold baby skin-to-skin?

Yes. Kangaroo Care is a great way for dad to bond with the new baby. Mom is the best person to provide Kangaroo Care immediately after birth to promote breastfeeding. After the first time, dad can Kangaroo while you shower or sleep or to help calm a fussy baby.

## Can I Kangaroo at home?

Yes. Kangaroo Care is good for your baby when you return home. You can Kangaroo at home holding your baby skin-to-skin as often as you like. You and your baby continue to get all of the benefits that you had in the hospital.

## Is there any reason I can't hold my baby skin-to-skin immediately after birth?

Sometimes there are medical reasons that keep you from holding your baby in Kangaroo right after delivery. If this is the case, your health care provider will help you start as soon as possible.

## Can I hold my baby skin-to-skin if I am not planning on breastfeeding?

Yes. Even if you do not plan to breastfeed, you can hold your baby in Kangaroo Care. Babies and mom benefit from Kangaroo Care. Babies are born wanting to breastfeed, so don't be surprised if the baby tries to latch on to the breast all by himself. You might change your mind about breastfeeding.

## Can I hold my baby in Kangaroo if I have twins?

Yes. You can hold both babies skin-to-skin, together or separately.

## Can I hold my premature baby skin-to-skin?

Premature babies benefit from being held skin-to-skin. It promotes growth and helps baby regulate temperature, breathing, and heart rate. Your health care provider will work with you when your baby is ready to be held skin-to-skin.



Photos provided by the University of Louisville Hospital Center for Women and Infants.

For more information on breastfeeding, talk with your Nutritionist, Nurse, Lactation Consultant or Breastfeeding Peer Counselor and the Lactation Consultant at the hospital where you had your baby.