



NOTES:

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



\*Photo Source: United States Breastfeeding Committee

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# SKIN-TO-SKIN CARE FOR YOUR BABY

TIPS FOR  
SUCCESSFUL  
BREASTFEEDING





**S**kin-to-skin, which can also be called kangaroo care, is when your naked baby, wearing no more than a diaper, is placed against your bare chest. Holding baby close in this way provides a great way to start right after birth. This allows baby and you to snuggle and cuddle. It helps baby get off to a good start with breastfeeding, while keeping some things the way baby was used to while you were pregnant.

### When should skin-to-skin be done?

#### Right after baby is born

Having the baby skin-to-skin on the birthing parent for the first hour after birth helps settle the baby and allow baby to make their way to the breast to feed. Baby is most alert at this point, so timing is perfect to begin to learn this new skill.



#### When awake in the hospital

Do skin-to-skin as much as you can while you are awake in the hospital. This will help bring in your milk supply more quickly.

#### After hospital discharge

Keep doing skin-to-skin once baby is home. This helps baby feel secure and calm and baby may cry less as a result. Skin-to-skin can be done as often as you choose. Many try to keep it up a few times a day. Be sure that the person holding baby skin-to-skin is always awake.

### How is skin-to-skin helpful?

#### Babies held skin-to-skin

- Stay warm
- Breathe and sleep better
- Feel more connected to their nursing parent
- Get breastfeeding off to a good start
- Have normal blood sugar level
- Feel secure and calm

#### Breastfeeding parents who do skin-to-skin

- Make more breastmilk
- Feel calmer
- Learn about their babies' needs
- Bond with their babies
- May be less likely to have postpartum anxiety or depression



### How is skin-to-skin done?

- Baby, wearing no more than a diaper, is placed on your bare chest between the breasts.
- A blanket can be placed over both caregiver and baby, if needed for warmth.
- Another family member or caregiver can place a hand on the baby's back to make sure baby is secure and safe.
- Babies born very early usually need to stay longer in the hospital. Families can stay close to baby by doing skin-to-skin or kangaroo care. Ask the nurse or doctor about holding baby skin-to-skin.

#### Others who hold baby skin-to-skin

- Connect with baby
- Feel included
- Enjoy the process

### Who can do skin-to-skin?

- Parents and other caregivers all can do skin-to-skin care.
- Twins can be held skin-to-skin at the same time on a parent or caregiver.
- Premature babies, even very tiny ones, can do skin-to-skin.
- All healthy babies can do skin-to-skin.

