

Get close to baby
Skin-to-skin!

Skin-to-skin contact means holding an undressed baby against mom's or dad's bare chest. This closeness builds the bond between the baby and parent. It can be especially helpful for premature babies, but all babies benefit. Skin-to-skin contact is sometimes called kangaroo care.

How to do it

You can start as soon as your baby is born and keep it up after you go home.

- Dress baby in just a diaper. Add a soft hat if baby is a newborn.
- Place baby upright against your bare chest. Between mom's breasts is best, or snuggling on dad's chest.
- Cover lightly with a blanket.
- Relax and enjoy.
- Try to spend time skin-to-skin for at least an hour a day, four days a week, for the first six weeks.
- You can also hold baby with a soft infant carrier. This lets you have your hands free and move around while skin-to-skin.

It is best for mom to hold baby skin-to-skin right after birth. This gets breastfeeding off to the best start.

More on back



Hold me, love me, praise me so,
teach me, hug me, watch me grow

Benefits for baby

Hold your baby skin-to-skin after birth. He* will adjust more quickly and easily to the world outside the womb.

Benefits for baby include:

- Stable heart rate
- More regular breathing
- Better oxygen levels
- Keeping warm
- Sleeping better
- Gaining weight faster
- Crying less
- Earlier hospital discharge for premature babies
- Easier time breastfeeding
- Less pain from routine procedures
- Comfort for a fussy baby



Keep holding baby skin-to-skin when you go home and you are awake. Babies who spend time skin-to-skin are more alert. They are often able to interact with their mothers sooner.

Benefits for parents

Skin-to-skin contact in the first hour after birth helps with breastfeeding. It also helps mom and baby feel closer.

Benefits for mom include:

- Less feelings of postpartum depression or baby blues
- More milk for breastfeeding

Both parents can benefit from skin-to-skin contact with baby by:

- Increasing sensitivity to baby
- Improving bonding and the feeling of closeness
- Feeling better about being able to care for baby

Get skin-to-skin and get close to your baby!

* All tips apply to both boys and girls