

Kangaroo Care

What is kangaroo care?

Kangaroo care, also called skin-to-skin care, is when you hold your baby naked or in just a diaper on your bare chest. Holding your baby this way will allow him or her to get to know you, through your scent, your touch, your voice, and the feel of your skin.

Who can kangaroo?

- Moms and dads can both provide kangaroo care.
- You can kangaroo your baby whether he or she is big or little, sick or healthy.

How will kangaroo care help my baby?

Many babies that are kangarooed

- stay warmer and have better heart and respiratory rates;
- cry less;
- have lower stress levels and gain weight better;
- bond better with mom and dad;
- breastfeed better;
- sleep better, get more sleep, and use less energy; and,
- often have better brain growth and development.

Many mothers also make more milk when they kangaroo their babies.

How do I kangaroo my baby?

- Plan to be with your baby for at least an hour (it is best to kangaroo your baby for at least 60–90 minutes, one whole sleep cycle). It is best if this is around your baby's feeding or 'hands-on' time.
- Remove the clothing that you have on above the waist.
- Your baby should be dressed in only a diaper. Cover your baby with a receiving blanket once he or she is on your chest.
- Your baby's nurse will help position your baby skin-to-skin, between your breasts, with your baby's head turned to the side. Your baby will be covered with a receiving blanket folded in four layers.
- Carefully sit back in the recliner beside your baby's bed. Get comfortable, lean back, and raise the footrest.
- Relax and enjoy this special time with your baby.
- If your baby is healthy, try to kangaroo for as long as possible each day. This gives your baby the most benefit from kangaroo care.
- Many moms find that they pump more milk after providing kangaroo care.

References

1. <https://www.hopkinsallchildrens.org/Services/Maternal-Fetal-Neonatal>

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2. Ann L Jefferies. Kangaroo care for the preterm infant and family. Canadian Paediatric Society. *Paediatr Child Health*. 2012:17