

Skin-to-skin Contact

Skin-to-skin contact also known as kangaroo care refers to placing a baby on their front in contact with the mother's chest. Skin-to-skin contact should ideally start at birth, but is helpful at any time. All mothers and babies can benefit from skin-to-skin contact regardless of feeding method. Fathers can also provide skin-to-skin contact and are welcome to participate.



Babies who are separated from their mothers experience profound stress and studies have shown that babies who are removed from their mothers in the hospital cry 10 times more than those left skin to skin. Immediate skin to skin contact after birth creates a unique bonding and can protect infants against infection through exposure to the mother's microflora. It also plays an important role in the prevention of allergic diseases for the babies.

Skin-to-skin contact should be uninterrupted and unhurried which allows the baby to progress through the steps of attachment. The baby can wear a nappy and hat for comfort and warmth. A warm towel or blanket can be placed over their backs.

Benefits of skin-to-skin contact

For baby

- More stable and normal skin temperatures
- More stable and normal heart rates and blood pressures
- Maintain blood sugar levels
- Feel less pain during painful medical procedures
- Less likely to cry
- Less likely to have breastfeeding problems
- More likely to latch on well
- Are more likely to breastfeed exclusively longer
- Protect against infection through exposure to maternal normal flora
- Help prevent allergic diseases

For mom

- Calming effect
- Enhanced bonding
- Higher oxytocin levels to stimulate milk production
- Better milk flow
- Increased milk production

The midwife will take time to discuss the birth plan and whether the mother would like skin-to-skin contact, as soon as possible, in the case of vaginal deliveries or a caesarean section, conditions allowing.

Compiled by:
Maternity Department

Reference:
Jack Newman MD (2009).
The Importance of Skin to Skin Contact.

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母嬰肌膚接觸

母嬰肌膚接觸或袋鼠護理法 (kangaroo care) 是指把寶寶躺在媽媽的胸膛，使兩人有肌膚接觸。

母嬰肌膚接觸在寶寶出生後即時開始固然是最理想，但在任何時候實踐都奏效。無論媽媽選擇甚麼餵哺方式，母嬰肌膚接觸都可以對媽媽和寶寶帶來許多好處。爸爸也歡迎和寶寶一起進行肌膚接觸，藉此增進親子關係。



寶寶與媽媽分開，會感到焦慮。有研究顯示，若住院期間母嬰分隔，寶寶的哭泣次數，會比常伴媽媽的寶寶多出10倍。寶寶出生後即時作肌膚接觸，可以增進母嬰的親子感情。寶寶暴露於媽媽的微生物群，亦可保護她/他免受感染，也有助預防過敏性疾病。

母嬰肌膚接觸不應被打擾，亦不應過分匆忙，好讓寶寶和爸媽能夠慢慢建立依附關係。為了令寶寶感到舒適和溫暖，可為寶寶包好尿布及戴上帽子，亦可在寶寶背上蓋上一條暖毛巾或毛毯。

母嬰肌膚接觸的好處

對寶寶

- 肌膚溫度較正常和穩定
- 心跳和血壓較正常和穩定
- 維持血糖水平
- 一些治療或會引起痛楚，肌膚接觸可減少疼痛感覺
- 哭泣次數或較少
- 所遇到的母乳餵哺問題或較少
- 寶寶吸吮情況較佳
- 母乳餵哺的時期或可延長
- 透過暴露於媽媽的微生物群，保護幼兒免受感染
- 有助預防過敏性疾病

對媽媽

- 帶來平靜的效果
- 增進與寶寶的親子感情
- 提升催乳素水平，刺激母乳生產量
- 母乳餵哺較暢順
- 分泌較多母乳

助產士會跟孕媽媽討論其分娩計劃 (birth plan)，以及其產後儘早作母嬰肌膚接觸的意願，包括順產、以及剖腹分娩後 (在媽媽狀況合適的情況下)。

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參考資料：
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