

It's my birthday - Give me a hug!

WHAT IS SKIN -TO- SKIN?



Skin-to-skin is the time right after birth is special for you and your baby. Keeping your baby skin-to-skin, baby's bare chest on your bare chest, helps baby to:

- **Avoid low blood sugars**
- **Stay warm**
- **Not cry**
- **Save calories for growth**
- **Experience less stress**
- **Breastfeed better**
- **Adjust more smoothly to a new world!**

Checklist for skin-to-skin

- ✓ Set the bed at about a 35 degree angle so you are elevated, not flat and not completely upright
- ✓ Baby is belly down, chest to chest
- ✓ Baby's head should be turned to the side so you can see the face
- ✓ The head should be in a "sniffing" position; slightly looking up
- ✓ Shoulders are flat against Mom
- ✓ Nose and mouth are not covered
- ✓ Neck is straight and not bent
- ✓ Baby's back is covered with a light blanket
- ✓ Give baby your full attention without distractions like smartphones
- ✓ Someone is watching you and your baby
- ✓ If you are sleepy place baby on his/her back in a bassinet or the in the arms of another caregiver

Skin-to-skin can happen after a cesarean delivery too, either on the operating table or in your recovery room. This is the perfect time to start breastfeeding. Baby may already be seeking the breast.

Skin-to-skin can continue during your hospital stay and after you go home. This close care makes it easier to know when to feed baby, especially if he/she is a little sleepy.

Other people can also provide skin-to-skin care such as partners or supervised siblings. Skin-to-skin is more than a nice greeting but has been shown through many years of research to be important for continued breastfeeding and optimal neurodevelopment.