

In the Community. For the Community.

Holding your Baby “Skin-to-Skin” is the Best Way to Begin

What is “Skin-to-Skin” or Kangaroo Care?

It is a special way to hold your baby. After birth, your baby wears only a diaper and is placed directly on your chest. You can hold your baby right after the delivery, while you are in the hospital room and while you are home. Doctors say this is the “best care” for your baby. All babies need skin-to-skin or Kangaroo Care.

Why is Kangaroo Care the “best care” for my baby?

- Your baby will transition to the outside world easily.
- Your baby will be warmer.
- Your baby will cry less and sleep more.
- Your baby will hear your voice and heartbeat.
- Your baby will get important antibodies from your skin.
- Your baby will breastfeed more easily.
- Your milk supply will be greater.
- You will feel more confident in caring for your baby.

Before the birth of your baby:

- Tell your care providers that you would like to “Kangaroo” right after your baby is born.
- Tell your family and friends present for the birth that your baby will stay on your chest and not be passed around from person to person. Otherwise, your baby will get cold.

Right after the birth of your baby:

- Your baby is dried and put on your bare chest
- You and your baby will be covered with a blanket.
- Your baby’s head is covered with a hat.
- You and your baby will rest for an hour or two in “Kangaroo” or skin-to-skin.

- You may give your baby the first milk (colostrum) during this first Kangaroo holding. This is best for your baby.
- Sometimes there are medical reasons that keep you from holding your baby in Kangaroo right after birth. Your caregiver will help you start as soon as possible.

During your stay at KCH:

- Your baby will be brought to you after the first bath to warm in Kangaroo.
- During the postpartum unit “Quiet Time” you and your baby can Kangaroo.
- You and your baby may Kangaroo any time during your hospital stay.
- Dad can “Kangaroo,” too, especially while you shower or sleep.

At home:

- Hold your baby in Kangaroo when you are awake and able to hold your baby safely.
- If your baby is fussy or having trouble falling asleep, hold your baby in Kangaroo.
- If you are having difficulty with breastfeeding your baby, try holding your baby in Kangaroo.