

Holding Your Baby Skin-to-Skin

- Skin-to-skin contact is an amazing start for you and your baby. Hold your baby skin-to-skin as soon as possible after birth unless there is a medical reason. If you are unable, your partner or support person can do it until you are ready.
- Skin-to-skin without interruption for an hour or more after birth, helps your baby adjust to the outside world. After the first few hours, you and your partner or support person are both encouraged to hold baby skin-to-skin often.
- Skin-to-skin contact helps get breastfeeding off to a good start, but **it is important no matter how you plan to feed your baby.**
- If you have a caesarean birth (C-section), you and your baby can still do skin-to-skin as long as you are awake, alert and there are no medical concerns.
- For babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), skin-to-skin contact, also known as Kangaroo Care, is very important. Speak with your baby's healthcare provider about how this will work for you.
- At home, continue holding your baby skin-to-skin often. Older babies benefit from skin-to-skin contact too. It helps them grow, develop and feel safe.



Skin-to-skin contact helps your baby

- have normal breathing, heart rate, and blood sugar
- cry less and stay warm
- have less pain during painful procedures



Skin-to-skin contact helps you

- bond with your baby
- recover from giving birth
- learn when your baby is hungry
- build your milk supply



For safe skin-to-skin contact

- sit in a laid-back position
- have good lighting so that you can see your baby's skin colour

MAKE SURE YOUR BABY'S:

- shoulders and chest are facing you
- face is visible and nose and mouth are not covered
- head is turned to one side
- head is tilted up (in a 'sniffing' position)
- legs are in a 'frog' position

If you are feeling sleepy while holding your baby skin-to-skin, place them in a safe space or with another person.

