

Kangaroo Care



What is Kangaroo Care?

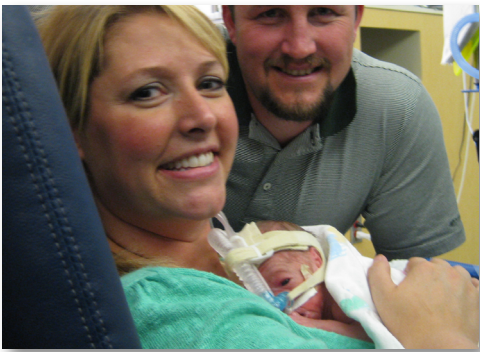
Kangaroo Care is when a child is held skin to skin with his parents. It contains three parts which include continuous skin to skin contact between infant and parent, exclusive breastfeeding and early home discharge in the kangaroo position.

Proven benefits:

- Temperature regulation
- Weight gain
- Improved stability in heart rate and breathing
- More mature sleep patterns
- Decreased pain response and stress
- Less time spent in hospital
- Improved duration of breast feeding
- Reduced stress in the parents
- Improved infant-mother bonding
- Decreased postpartum depression
- Improved milk production
- Parents have more confidence in providing care

How to prepare for Kangaroo Care:

1. The baby must be stable. Coordinate with your nurse to find out if your baby is ready for Kangaroo Care. If not, ask your nurse about encircled holding.
2. It is important that the caregiver be comfortable and well supported. This takes preparation so give your nurse and yourself time to get ready.



How it helps your baby:

Recent studies have focused on the effects of Kangaroo Care on brain development and long term outcomes of premature infants. Infants provided Kangaroo Care at least three hours each day have more mature brains and higher IQs when they leave the hospital. Kangaroo Care helps your baby develop, especially in speech, hearing and social skills.

Skin to skin contact with parents decreases your baby's pain and stress. The time you spend with your baby is an important part of promoting and protecting brain development.



35 weeks



39 to 40 weeks

To do a standing transfer:

Learn to pick up your baby yourself so they go straight to your chest from the bed and have less stress during the transfer. Lift from a bed that is the right height for you and have a chair ready directly behind you. Pick your baby up in a side-lying position so you can contain your baby with arms and legs tucked in for comfort.

Positioning:

Place the baby on her tummy, tuck her arms and legs under her body. When 32-34 weeks the baby can also be held in a side-lying position to help the baby work on head control.

Timing:

It is best for Kangaroo Care to be done for as long as possible, at least 90 minutes each time. This is best to minimize transfers and disturbances to the baby.