



## Embrace Skin-to-Skin Care

### Learning the Value of Skin-to-Skin

The best start for mom and baby is skin-to-skin — not just for breastfeeding, but also to support the baby's brain development. Skin-to-skin provides a safe, warm place where the baby's brain begins to make positive connections with mom and the world.

#### 1. Communicate Early and Often

Begin an open line of communication early with your baby. A lot can be 'said' when a child and parent are skin-to-skin. Non-verbal cues like "I'm hungry" and "I'm tired" can be understood well before crying monopolizes the conversation.

#### 2. Advance Your Baby's Development and Growth

Skin-to-skin is important for a baby's brain development—particularly in the first eight weeks of life.

##### Advanced Chemistry

The close time spent with your baby skin-to-skin creates a lasting and positive bond. It also releases oxytocin in the mother—a calming hormone that reduces depression.





### **3. Keep Calm and Comfort On**

Skin-to-skin calms and soothes both parent and child. Parents' anxiety is reduced and confidence increased with recurring embraces — while the child's temperature, blood pressure, heart and respiratory rates maintain a healthy balance.

### **4. Remove the Excess**

Excessive clothing slows down your baby's ability to initiate breastfeeding. Swaddling has long been the custom for comforting and keeping babies warm. However, when babies are swaddled, many hunger and feeding cues can be missed. Instead, be sure to wrap a blanket over and around you both for added warmth and do not expose the child to cold temperatures and breezes.

#### **Going Somewhere?**

Simply wrap your baby against your chest under loose-fitting clothing or special skin-to-skin apparel. Don't let heavy baby carriers and extra baggage weigh you down.

## **Babies Like Dad's Skin too!**

### **1. Give your child one hour or more**

The baby's first hour is truly sacred, but babies should continue to spend as many hours as possible every day, skin-to-skin with either parent.

### **2. Strengthen your bond and stick together**

Closeness is one of the best ways to learn about your baby and develop a critical bond with your child to last a lifetime.

