

# Skin to Skin Care Right After Birth

## What is Skin to Skin Care?

Skin to skin care is holding your baby on your chest between your bare breasts so your baby's skin is touching yours. You can do this whether you choose to breastfeed or not.

## How Do I Do Skin to Skin Care?

- Hold your baby skin to skin right after birth unless your baby needs medical help.
- Your baby should be placed right on your skin where he or she can reach your breasts easily.
- Your baby may wear a diaper or hat. Your bed covers and/or hospital gown can then be placed on top of you and your baby, leaving the baby's head uncovered.
- After birth, try to do constant skin to skin care for at least **1 hour** or until after you breastfeed (if this is your feeding choice). Also, do skin to skin care as much as you can over the next few days.
- Your baby's weight and other checks can wait until after an hour of skin to skin.
- If you can't do skin to skin care for any reason, a close family member may do it in your place.

## Why Should I Do Skin to Skin Care?

### It helps your baby to:

- Stay warm
- Be comforted by hearing your heartbeat
- Let go of the stress from being born
- Breastfeed easier
- Cry less
- Have better sleep
- Keep blood sugar normal
- Have less chance of getting sick



Your baby's skin is touching yours right after birth.

It's important that your family and other guests support skin to skin care right after birth. So they should not hold the baby during this time.

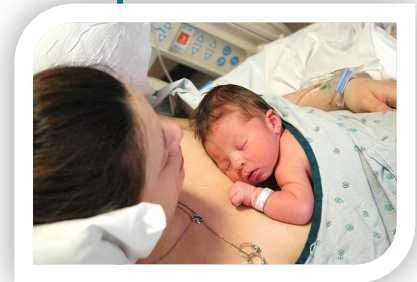


Photo by bradbrundage\*



## It helps you to:

- Have less pain after the birth
- Begin bonding with your baby
- Increase your positive feelings toward your baby
- Feel more confident about caring for your baby
- Increase your milk supply

## What if I have a C-Section?

You can still do skin to skin if you get a C-section!

When you and your baby are stable in the operating room, you can start skin to skin during the surgery.

Your nurse can help place the baby on your bare chest. This way you and your baby will get the benefits of skin to skin right after birth.

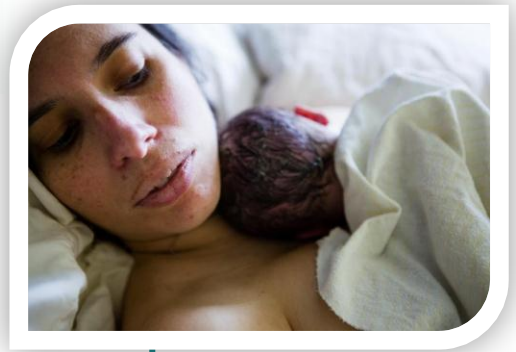
If you can't do skin to skin in the operating room, you can start in the recovery room.

Try to do it for 1 hour and until after the first feeding.

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Hold your baby skin to skin as much as you can while you are in the hospital, and after you go home, too!

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Try to do "skin to skin" for at least 1 straight hour.

