

Transcript

Whether your baby enters the world vaginally or by cesarean section, pre-term or full-term, research has shown that all babies benefit from immediate and ongoing skin to skin contact with mom, sometimes called “Kangaroo care.”

“Oh he’s waking up so nicely. Look at that.”

“Here he comes.”

Right after birth, hold your baby on your chest, skin to skin. During this “Golden Hour”, the first hour right after birth, your warm skin can help your baby’s body temperature match the temperature he experienced in the womb, making his transition into the world a little easier.

Some babies have a slower heartbeat and do not breathe regularly right after birth. When hearing your heart beat and breathing, babies can regulate their own more easily. And blood glucose levels also stay higher for those babies who experience skin to skin contact.

Newborn babies have a heightened sense of smell. Babies lying on their mother’s chest after birth can seek out the nipple and begin to breastfeed on their own.

“We can see him trying. Very good. And then you can help him there.”

“That’s right.”

This can help establish mom’s breast milk earlier. In fact, research shows that mothers and babies who have skin to skin contact breastfeed longer, providing long-term benefits to both baby and mother.

“In the early days, letting him find his own way feels nice for him.”

In the first days and weeks of life, any chance you get, lay your baby skin to skin with you. Ongoing skin to skin contact can help your baby’s digestive system to mature and strengthens her immune system.

It reduces a stress hormone called cortisol, while at the same time increasing the happy hormone, oxytocin, reducing your baby’s stress levels. Babies who get regular skin to skin contact often sleep better and for longer and cry less. In other words, they are less stressed, reducing your stress as well.

And you as a mother will benefit in other ways as well. The touch, smell and sounds of your baby stimulate hormones in your body that can help increase your sense of mothering and reduce your risk of postpartum depression. Holding your baby skin to skin can increase the bond you share and will share for a lifetime.

And don’t forget Dad’s need for bonding time. Skin to skin contact with Daddy can help increase the bond they share and establish your baby’s sense of well-being, safety and love.

Your baby's birth was a journey. Take some time, right after that journey to enjoy the feel, smell and sounds of your baby. Do this often in the first weeks of your baby's life. Both you and your baby will benefit for a lifetime.