



The benefits of skin to skin contact

Breastfeeding is more than simply offering food.

Breastfeeding offers many health benefits to both mother and baby. These benefits start right away, and last a lifetime. In addition to better health, there are many other benefits that make breastfeeding so special.

Breastfeeding offers a wonderful chance for mother and baby to bond. Skin to skin is one way to position baby for a feeding, and it is ideal for breastfeeding.

Place baby belly-down, directly on your bare chest, or “skin to skin”. Skin to skin is one of the best ways to hold, love and feed your baby.

Skin to skin: from birth to beyond.

Offering your baby a safe, warm place to snuggle on your bare chest is a wonderful way to welcome, and help him adjust to life outside the womb. It is also the best way to get a good start with breastfeeding. In fact, many studies show that mothers and babies that spend time skin to skin find breastfeeding easier to learn, and breastfeed longer. Start skin to skin contact as soon as possible after delivery, and continue for as long as you and your baby desire.

Hold me... Love me... Feed me...

Benefits of skin to skin contact:

- ✓ Baby feels secure and cries less
- ✓ Mother produces more milk
- ✓ Baby latches on the breast with ease and eats more
- ✓ Baby has better blood sugar levels
- ✓ Baby stays warm
- ✓ Baby is better protected from early infections and allergies
- ✓ Better health and shorter hospital stays for pre-term babies
- ✓ Mother feels more confident
- ✓ Longer duration of breastfeeding
- ✓ Baby will gain weight at a healthy rate

Remember: your body temperature will rise to keep baby warm. You also may place a blanket over baby for added warmth.

Skin to skin is also a great way for fathers to bond with their new babies. All babies crave and benefit from close contact with their mothers and fathers skin to skin is especially beneficial for pre-term babies that have a hard time keeping warm on their own.

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Skin to skin: step-by-step

1. Undress baby down to diaper.
2. Place baby belly-down, directly on your bare chest.
3. Support baby's lower backside with your hand.
4. Baby will move towards the breast and latch on. This may take a while, so be patient.
5. Breastfeeding will occur naturally.

