



5 things to do before holding your baby in kangaroo care.

Before moving the baby out of the bed or incubator, parents and volunteer cuddlers need some basic knowledge to increase their confidence and the baby's safety.

1. **Learn to read your baby's cues and basic monitor readings:** Learn from the healthcare team to recognize when your baby is sleeping/awake/stressed and how to distinguish signs of stability and warning signs of instability, pain, overstimulation (to take corrective action). If (at all) possible, plan to not disturb a sleeping baby.
2. **Arrange your time to hold for as long as possible** (90 minutes or 80% of your visit, whichever is longer). Take care of your own personal needs before holding (food, fluids, restroom, etc.) Have a bottle of water and a protein bar available. Your baby will help you relax, however, ONLY take a restoring nap when properly wearing The Zaky ZAK, with zipper fully closed, and while supervised by another adult. You may also read softly (content is not as important, your voice is) or you may rest, work, or do a craft or scrapbook, write a journal, visit with a volunteer, take photos (without flash), watch a movie in a tablet/phone/computer (don't forget the headphones). This is also a great time to read manuals, books, or other resources provided by the hospital and to learn the benefits of Kangaroo Care for you and for your baby. <https://tinyurl.com/KCBenefits>
3. **At home, prepare the skin:** Remove any jewelry that might touch the baby and refrain from using powder, lotion, or perfume on the chest before skin to skin contact. Do not smoke as the baby should smell your natural scent. When possible use organic soap/lotion (available from The Zaky ZEN) so the baby feels your own natural scent. Your chest must be free of any lesions or skin breakdown.
4. **Prepare for the transfer and for interventions during kangaroo care:** Learn the differences, benefits, and expectations between the standing/parent transfer and the sitting/nurse transfer and practice with a doll before moving your baby if necessary. ONLY do the standing transfer alone after the explicit training and approval of the staff. Follow The Zaky ZAK's manufacturer's instructions to access the baby from the top, sides, and bottom to perform as many interventions during skin to skin contact as possible. Babies feel less pain when a painful procedure is performed during kangaroo care. Learn how to partially open the zipper to allow the baby to sniff, explore, or even breastfeed/pump.
5. **When is time to kangaroo care but before picking up or moving the baby:**
Parents: wear The Zaky ZAK in your naked torso (no bra, shirt, etc.)
Cuddlers: wear The Zaky ZAK over your blouse/shirt (women, remove bra if possible)
Wear The Zaky ZAK by selecting the zipper on the size that is comfortable for you (not too loose where the baby will slide, and not too tight where it can restrict breathing. Close the zipper in the front and to one side for easy access. Your body will warm The Zaky ZAK for the baby while s/he is being prepared for the transfer. The baby only wears a diaper (not covering the belly button) and a hat (socks if it is cold).



5 things to do before holding your baby in kangaroo care.

Before moving the baby out of the bed or incubator, parents and volunteer cuddlers need some basic knowledge to increase their confidence and the baby's safety.

6. **Learn to read your baby's cues and basic monitor readings:** Learn from the healthcare team to recognize when your baby is sleeping/awake/stressed and how to distinguish signs of stability and warning signs of instability, pain, overstimulation (to take corrective action). If (at all) possible, plan to not disturb a sleeping baby.
7. **Arrange your time to hold for as long as possible** (90 minutes or 80% of your visit, whichever is longer). Take care of your own personal needs before holding (food, fluids, restroom, etc.) Have a bottle of water and a protein bar available. Your baby will help you relax, however, ONLY take a restoring nap when properly wearing The Zaky ZAK, with zipper fully closed, and while supervised by another adult. You may also read softly (content is not as important, your voice is) or you may rest, work, or do a craft or scrapbook, write a journal, visit with a volunteer, take photos (without flash), watch a movie in a tablet/phone/computer (don't forget the headphones). This is also a great time to read manuals, books, or other resources provided by the hospital and to learn the benefits of Kangaroo Care for you and for your baby. <https://tinyurl.com/KCBenefits>
8. **At home, prepare the skin:** Remove any jewelry that might touch the baby and refrain from using powder, lotion, or perfume on the chest before skin to skin contact. Do not smoke as the baby should smell your natural scent. When possible use organic soap/lotion (available from The Zaky ZEN) so the baby feels your own natural scent. Your chest must be free of any lesions or skin breakdown.
9. **Prepare for the transfer and for interventions during kangaroo care:** Learn the differences, benefits, and expectations between the standing/parent transfer and the sitting/nurse transfer and practice with a doll before moving your baby if necessary. ONLY do the standing transfer alone after the explicit training and approval of the staff. Follow The Zaky ZAK's manufacturer's instructions to access the baby from the top, sides, and bottom to perform as many interventions during skin to skin contact as possible. Babies feel less pain when a painful procedure is performed during kangaroo care. Learn how to partially open the zipper to allow the baby to sniff, explore, or even breastfeed/pump.
10. **When is time to kangaroo care but before picking up or moving the baby:**
Parents: wear The Zaky ZAK in your naked torso (no bra, shirt, etc.)
Cuddlers: wear The Zaky ZAK over your blouse/shirt (women, remove bra if possible)
Wear The Zaky ZAK by selecting the zipper on the size that is comfortable for you (not too loose where the baby will slide, and not too tight where it can restrict breathing. Close the zipper in the front and to one side for easy access. Your body will warm The Zaky ZAK for the baby while s/he is being prepared for the transfer. The baby only wears a diaper (not covering the belly button) and a hat (socks if it is cold).