

SKIN 2 SKIN

*the importance of the first hour**

Skin-to-skin contact means having baby placed on **mother's bare chest** and covered with a dry blanket. Contact should be immediately after birth and uninterrupted for at least **1 hour** or until the first breastfeed.^{1,2}

BABY'S FIRST HOUR^{3,4}



BENEFITS^{1,2}

- Baby is able to hear the mom's heart beat and breathing, and smell and feel her skin, which is very comforting.
- Stabilizes baby's vital signs – heart rate, breathing, blood sugar, body temperature.
- Promotes interaction and bonding with the baby.
- Decreases the level of stress hormones in mom and baby, which results in a calmer baby who cries less.
- Increases mom's confidence and relaxation, which helps stimulate milk production and let down.
- Promotes earlier establishment of a proper latch and feeding, which means that mom is less likely to have sore nipples and baby will get more milk.
- Babies are more likely to breastfeed exclusively.

ROUTINE PRACTICE^{1,2}

The **first hour** can't be repeated.

These can be **delayed**:

- ▶ Vitamin K injection
- ▶ Erythromycin eye drops
- ▶ Weight

Routine monitoring and observations **can be done on mother's chest** after vaginal or caesarean birth



100% of full term babies **BENEFIT** from immediate skin-to-skin contact^{1,4}

**normal newborn behaviours in the first hour may be impacted by medical interventions during labour and birth*

1. Moore, Elizabeth R., Gene C. Anderson, and Nils Bergman. "Early skin-to-skin contact for mothers and their healthy newborn infants." Cochrane Database Syst Rev 3 (2007).
2. Stevens, Jeni, Virginia Schmied, Elaine Burns, and Hannah Dahlen. "Immediate or early skin-to-skin contact after a Caesarean section": a review of the literature." Maternal & child nutrition (2014).
3. Widström, A-M., Gunilla Lilja, P. Aaltomaa-Michalias, A. Dahllöf, M. Lintula, and Eva Nissen. "Newborn behaviour to locate the breast when skin-to-skin: a possible method for enabling early self-regulation." Acta paediatrica 100, no. 1 (2011): 79-85.
4. Phillips, Raylene. "The sacred hour: Uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth." Newborn and Infant Nursing Reviews 13, no. 2 (2013): 67-72.



For more information on the continued benefits of skin-to-skin, contact the Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-5853 or visit www.healthunit.org

