

## THE IMPORTANCE OF BREASTFEEDING

### Kangaroos know...

### DO YOU?

Skin to Skin;  
More than a gentle  
touch...

Separation of the infant from its mother causes stress or “shut down behaviours”. Dr. Nils Bergman describes the “protest - despair” response as a significant factor leading to undesirable changes in the newborn’s heart rate, respiratory rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation, vagal tone and plasma cortisol, all signs and symptoms of stress.

#### What is “skin-to-skin”?

- Uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact between a mother and her healthy full term infant.
- Similar to Kangaroo Mother Care (mothers and premature infants)
- Time together should remain uninterrupted until after first feeding.

#### How do we achieve skin-to-skin?

- Newborn on mother’s nude chest
- Newborn is either completely nude or with only a diaper
- Newborn is placed vertically between mother’s breasts
- Newborn is covered with a blanket

#### Results are Amazing!

Skin-to-skin babies have the highest temperature. ~ Mothers and babies have correlated body temperatures ~ Infant heart rate increased ~ Infant experiences stable respiration ~ Decreased white blood cell count ~ Decreased crying ~ Decreased stress hormones ~ Organized rooting and sucking ~ Improved oxygenation levels ~ Stable blood sugar ~ Skin-to-skin helps infant adapt and adjust to extra-uterine life at a physiological level ~ Steady maternal presence provides an essential regulatory function for growth and maturation ~ Effects persist after contact ~ Skin-to-skin offers best signs of early attachment ~ Infant’s neuro-motor organization optimized ~ Infant experiences decreased pain during invasive procedure ~ improved breastfeeding following C-section

Safe...like a  
baby kangaroo  
in a pouch .

#### Benefits

##### For Mother

- increased uterine contractions
- increased rest
- increased attachment to infant

##### For Father

- baby cries less
- decreased stress hormones
- decreased testosterone in father; increased estradiol

“Depriving infants of this experience exerts a lasting impact on the infant’s growth and development”



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## Other Resources

- Bergman, N (2007) Restoring the Original Paradigm for Infant Care. Available at [www.kangaroomothercare.com/prevtalk01.htm](http://www.kangaroomothercare.com/prevtalk01.htm)