

Kangaroo Care

Kangaroo care is valuable for all families regardless of birthing and feeding method

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Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) - was originally defined as continuous and prolonged skin-to-skin contact (SSC/STS) between the mother (or substitute) and the infant, initiated at birth and continued at home after early discharge, with exclusive breastfeeding and adequate support and follow-up ⁽¹⁵⁾

KMC was proposed as an alternative to conventional neonatal care for low birthweight infants in resource limited countries ^(1,2,3)



KMC has been adapted around the world to meet the distinct needs of diversified settings and populations

Kangaroo Care (KC) modifications include: customized **KC** sessions (timing of initiation, duration and number per day), feeding choices (non - exclusive breastfeeding, gavage feeding), newborn clothing options (dressed or undressed), and discharge criteria ^(1,2,6,20)

Benefits

Influences breastmilk antibodies

Assists with cardiorespiratory and temperature stability

Improves neurodevelopmental outcomes

Decreases newborn sepsis

Facilitates infant's adaptation to non-sterile environment post delivery



Stabilizes blood sugar

Encourages sleep organization and duration of quiet sleep

Decreases hospital readmission rates

Assists with pain modulation

Increases weight gain, growth in length



Increases rates of breastfeeding/breastmilk provision



Enhances mothering behaviours



Increases paternal closeness and confidence when caring for infant



Empowers parents caring for premature/unwell infants ^(4,10,12,16)

Barriers

Parents

Lack of understanding regarding benefits and bonding

Time commitment required ⁽¹⁴⁾

Lack of social support/ financial assistance

Cultural expectations/ gender roles

Staff

Lack of acceptance of KMC or belief in the benefits

Lack of education ⁽¹⁹⁾

Time /staffing constraints ⁽²⁰⁾

Institutions

Lack of uniform knowledge and protocols ⁽²⁰⁾

Lack of suitable environments- (beds, wraps, chairs and private spaces) ^(19,20)

Safety



Kangaroo Care is safe, natural, effective, and a low-cost intervention that can be utilized in any setting ^(1,3,6,12)

KMC has been recommended by Lancet and WHO as a way to improve preterm birth outcomes ⁽²¹⁾



Kangaroo Care References

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