

When your child is placed in intermediate care or in a postnatal care unit (unité post-natale de soins spécifiques (UPSS)) and/or is no longer in an incubator, it remains very important to practice kangaroo care. Although you may hold your baby in your arms, the benefits are not as noticeable as when you provide skin-to-skin contact with your child.

Happy session!



**Document produced by**  
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**Printing**  
Imprimerie du CHU Sainte-Justine

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F-49A GRM 30008238 (rév.08-2016)



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Have you heard of Kangaroo Care?

Kangaroo Care is the practice of skin-to-skin contact between an infant and a parent that lets you enjoy numerous benefits

For the baby, this means sweet and relaxing moments while nestled against your skin that would:

- Stabilize the baby's heart rhythm
- Stabilize the baby's heart rate
- Restore or maintain a normal body temperature
- Stabilize or reduce oxygen requirements
- Reduce the frequency of apnea and bradycardia
- Improve the quality of the baby's sleep
- Foster the baby's growth and development
- Reduce hospitalization time
- Increase the baby's sense of security



As parents, these moments will encourage a deeper attachment while playing a greater part in your baby's recovery, getting to know your baby better and contributing to your baby's overall well-being. Moreover, the practice of skin-to-skin contact helps mothers maintain a better lactation and so contributes to better breastfeeding.

The practice of skin-to-skin contact was introduced in Columbia in 1979. The method was primarily used to offer parents the opportunity of playing an active role in their infant's recovery by acting as a "human incubator."

Maintaining skin-to-skin contact entails certain requirements from the baby. However, you should know that most infants are eligible for the practice. Only very ill babies or unstable babies cannot benefit from this practice. Talk with your nurse to learn more about you and your baby.

Whenever possible, it is preferable to plan ahead for kangaroo sessions. This allows nurses to better plan your baby's care. Each session requires a minimum of one hour to allow the baby to take full advantage of the benefits received from skin-to-skin contact. The transition between the baby's bed and the parent must be as smooth as possible. The parent's tolerance and comfort must also be taken into consideration during skin-to-skin sessions.

Your baby may experience bouts of apnea and bradycardia during a skin-to-skin session. In those cases, a member of the health care team will ensure the baby's position is appropriate. Rest assured you are never responsible for these episodes!



There are certain steps to be taken that are essential to good skin-to-skin sessions. Parents must first wash their hands. Then parents must expose the upper part of their body (no bras for mothers) and wear a hospital gown (opened in the front).

The parent is to have clean skin that is not broken or irritated, free of perfume or harmful scent and not wear any jewelry.

With the help of one of the health care team members, the parent then takes the baby and places the baby on his/her chest before sitting down in a chair.

The baby must remain in a skin-to-skin position during the entire session. Parents may take the opportunity to enjoy these intimate moments and use soothing words or sing softly to the baby.

Some treatments (gavage for example) may be promoted during skin-to-skin sessions.

At the end of each session, the parent with the help of the health care team member will place the baby back in the crib or in the incubator.

Afterward, it is recommended to limit handling the baby to prolong the beneficial effects of the skin-to-skin session.



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