

Skin-to-skin contact important for newborns, moms



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SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-PRESS

Skin-to-skin contact is when you place your newly born baby directly on your chest without a blanket or any clothing between the two of you for the first hour or so after birth. Then a warm dry blanket can be placed over the two of you to keep heat in. This allows your body heat to keep your baby warm, while keeping your baby with you instead of under a warmer.

There are many benefits of skin-to-skin contact for your baby. They include:

- » It keeps your baby's temperature stable better than being wrapped up in a blanket or under a warmer.
- » It helps to regulate your baby's heart rate and breathing.
- » It allows your baby to smell and find your breast so that breastfeeding

may start more easily and help breastfeeding to be more successful.

» It's comforting to your baby to be close to you. The sound of your heart and rhythm of your breathing are soothing to your baby as it is familiar to him/her from being inside the womb. He/she is familiar with your voice and scent as well!

» It is soothing for you too, decreasing your stress hormones in your blood, which allows you to better bond with and enjoy your new baby.

» Babies who spend time skin-to-skin right after birth are less likely to need the neonatal intensive care unit, because of the ability to better regulate body temperature, heart rate, and breathing being skin-to-skin.

» It is beneficial not only after birth, but later on, too! It can help you to build your confidence in caring for your baby. It also can help your baby heal if your baby is sick.

» Dads, you can and are encouraged to have skin-to-skin contact with your baby as well! This will help the bond



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Skin-to-skin
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with baby grow.

There are no risks to skin-to-skin contact as long as you and your full term baby are healthy at birth.

To ensure that you are able to have skin-to-skin time immediately after birth, be sure to discuss this with your midwife or doctor, and the nurses at the hospital. Good communication allows them to give you and baby the care and experience you want. The nurse-mid-

wives at Physicians Primary Care of Southwest Florida encourage skin-to-skin contact for mom and baby. At Cape Coral Hospital, this is the standard of care for healthy term newborns.

So go ahead – get close with your baby. Get skin-to-skin close.

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