

## Good for parents

- ✓ Helps you get to know your baby
- ✓ Allows you and baby to gaze into each other's eyes
- ✓ Helps you bond with your baby
- ✓ Increases your confidence in caring for your baby
- ✓ Lowers your blood pressure
- ✓ Slows your heart beat
- ✓ Increases 'love hormone'
- ✓ Reduces chances of getting post-partum depression



And for mothers:

- ✓ Helps make more breast milk
- ✓ Helps with birth recovery
- ✓ Increases breast milk hormones

## How to do skin-to-skin safely

- Sit or lay slightly upright, in a comfortable position.
- Turn your baby's face to one side in a position that allows baby to breathe easily.
- Make sure you can see your baby's nose and mouth.
- Tuck baby's legs up and bring their hands up near baby's face.
- Cover your baby's back with a thin blanket.
- Let your baby stay on your chest for as long as possible while you are awake.

If you have any questions about safe skin-to-skin, ask your baby's nurse.



**Safe Skin-to-skin**  
- Bare chest to bare chest -

## Want to learn more about skin-to-skin?

Fraser Health  
[fraserhealth.ca](http://fraserhealth.ca)  
Search 'safe skin-to-skin'



Or scan this QR code

HealthLinkBC  
[healthlinkbc.ca](http://healthlinkbc.ca)  
Search 'Baby's Best Chance'



Or scan this QR code

Perinatal Service BC  
[perinataleservicesbc.ca](http://perinataleservicesbc.ca)  
Search 'Kangaroo Care'



Or scan this QR code

Unicef UK  
[unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly](http://unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly)  
Search 'skin to skin'



Or scan this QR code

## Safe Skin-to-Skin Cuddling



**Good for Baby  
Good for You**

 **fraserhealth**

[www.fraserhealth.ca](http://www.fraserhealth.ca)

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

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To order: [patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca](http://patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca)

# Why safe skin-to-skin cuddling is good for baby

## Creates a natural place

All babies benefit from skin-to-skin time with their parents.

When held skin-to-skin, your baby:

- hears your heart beat and your voice
- smells your skin and breast milk
- feels you breathe and move
- touches your skin
- is less likely to cry

Overall, it helps your baby adjust to the world outside the womb.

### Safe Skin-to-skin

- Bare chest to bare chest -



Safe Skin-to-Skin Cuddling

## Helps the brain develop

At birth, **smell** and **touch** are important. The first 2 hours after birth, the brain starts making lots of connections that can have a lifelong effect on learning and behaviour. Your touch and your smell help build these connections.

Your voice also helps your baby learn language. Skin-to-skin is a good time to talk, sing, and read to your baby.

Studies tell us that safe skin-to-skin cuddling in early life:

- gives your baby a good start in growing emotionally
- creates trust between you and your baby
- promotes baby's self-confidence and improved social relationships later in life

### Did you know?

When a baby is not held skin-to-skin by their parents, the baby's stress hormones rise. This makes it hard for the baby's body to control temperature and heart rate. Also, increased stress hormones are harmful to a baby's brain.

## Improves body systems

The best way to regulate your baby's body systems is to cuddle your baby skin-to-skin.

Skin-to-skin can help keep your baby's:

- heart and breathing rates steady
- blood sugar at normal levels

Skin-to-skin helps keep your baby's temperature steady. Skin-to-skin with mother can raise a baby's temperature up to 2°C or lower it by 1°C.

Also, skin-to-skin contact exposes your baby to good bacteria on your skin and this helps protect your baby.



## Helps with breastfeeding

The World Health Organization recommends that all babies remain skin-to-skin with mothers until after the first feeding.



Ideally, you should have continuous skin-to-skin contact for the first 2 hours after birth.

We also suggest you safely hold your baby skin-to-skin for most of the next 24 hours, and then as much as possible after that. The more skin-to-skin contact, the better.

Being close to you and smelling you helps your baby learn to root and search for the breast. With smell and very little help, your baby can latch on and suck.

### Signs of hunger:

- turning head toward or rooting around on the chest
- opening and closing mouth
- sucking on fingers or skin
- putting hand to mouth