

How to get started?

Your nurse will discuss kangaroo care with you.
General instructions for performing kangaroo care:

- Remove your bra and wear a blouse or shirt that opens in the front. (A hospital gown that opens in the front can be made available for your use.) Screens will be provided for your privacy.
- Your baby, wearing only a diaper and hat, will be placed on your bare chest in an upright position.
- Cover baby with your shirt, gown or a blanket.
- Relax and enjoy this unique bonding experience.
- Spend some time with your baby at each visitation.

Kangaroo Care For Your New Baby

Useful telephone number

Central Appointments

6294-4050



Early separation resulting from premature birth has deprived you the opportunity to hold and bond with your baby.

As your baby grows and condition has stabilised, the concept of 'Kangaroo Care' is introduced.

What is kangaroo care?

Kangaroo care is a method of holding a baby that involves skin-to-skin contact. Your baby, who is naked except for a diaper and a piece of cloth (either a receiving blanket or the parent's clothing) covering his or her back, is placed in an upright position against the parent's bare chest. This snuggling of the baby inside the pouch of their parent's shirt simulates a kangaroo's pouch, leading to the creation of the term "kangaroo care."

There is no better way to know your baby other than to practice kangaroo care where you and your baby can bond together. Fathers can provide kangaroo care for their babies too!



How did kangaroo care come about?

Kangaroo care came about as a response to the high death rate in preterm babies seen in Bogota, Columbia, in the late 1970s. The death rate for premature infants was 70 percent. Infants were dying due to infections, respiratory problems and simply due to lack of attention. Researchers found that babies who were held close to their mothers' bodies for large portions of the day, not only survived, but thrived.

What are the benefits of kangaroo care?

The benefits of kangaroo care to the baby include:

- Stabilisation of the baby's heart rate
- Improved (more regular) breathing pattern
- Improved oxygen saturation levels (an indicator of how well oxygen is being delivered to all the infants' organs and tissues)
- Gain in sleep time
- More rapid weight gain
- Decreased crying
- More successful breastfeeding episodes
- Earlier hospital discharge

The benefits of kangaroo care to the parents include:

- Improved bonding, feeling of closeness with their babies
- Increased breast milk supply
- Increased confidence in ability to care for their babies
- Increased confidence that their babies are well cared for
- Increased sense of control

Why does kangaroo care work?

Research studies have shown that skin-to-skin bonding stabilises heart and respiratory rates, improves oxygen saturation rates, better regulates an infant's body temperature and help conserves calories.

When a mother is "kangarooing", her baby typically snuggles into the mother's breasts and falls asleep within a few minutes. The breasts change in temperature to accommodate the baby's body temperature accordingly. Thus, the breasts can increase in temperature when the baby's body is cold and can decrease in temperature as the baby is warmed.

The extra sleep that your baby gets snuggling with the mother and the assistance in regulating body temperature, helps the baby conserve energy and redirects calorie expenditures towards growth and weight gain. Research has also shown that kangaroo care results in positive effects on brain development.