

Your body provides just the right heat when your baby is firmly and comfortably snuggling against your skin.

Your baby should stay in the KMC position wherever you go or whatever you do. While you are washing yourself other grown-up family members can give skin-to-skin care.

Discharge arrangements

- At discharge we will arrange **follow-up visits** until your baby has reached a satisfactory weight.
- It is important that you take your baby to the clinic for immunisations.
- Come to the hospital immediately when your baby is unwell or sick. The following are danger signs that a newborn or premature baby may present with. When you find any of these signs you need to get help for your baby as soon as possible. You can go to the clinic or to the hospital if your baby:
 - stops feeding or sucking as well as before, or vomits
 - is cold to the touch in spite of efforts to re-warm baby
 - is hot (Fever)
 - makes twitching movements
 - has breathing problems:
 - the breathing stops and only starts again when you touch baby
 - the breathing is fast with in-drawing of the chest
 - the breathing is noisy with groans and grunting sounds
 - the skin has changed colour – pale or blue
 - is very sleepy and is less active than before or becomes restless and irritable
 - has diarrhoea
 - There is redness, swelling and discharge from the eyes, cord and skin

Remember that your breast milk is the only food your baby will need for about the 1st 6 months of life. Do not start other food at an earlier age.

If you still have questions about Kangaroo Mother Care, ask the nursing staff or doctors. They are willing to help.

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October 1999 Kalafong Hospital, Updated 2015

Adapted from "Kangaroo Mother Care" at Groote Schuur Hospital

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Kangaroo Mother Care



Sometimes babies are born too soon or too small. We call them premature or low birth weight (LBW) babies. In the first days or weeks premature and LBW babies can be unstable and they need extra-special care.

What can doctors and nurses do for these low birth weight babies?

- An incubator helps to keep them warm.
- A tube connected to a vein is used for medicine.
- The nurses give food and medicines through a thin tube in the mouth.
- A head box or a thin tube at the baby's nose may give extra oxygen.
- A special machine called a ventilator may help the baby breathe.
- Other machines check if the baby is okay.

What can I do for my baby?

You can show your baby special love and tenderness.

- Gently touch your baby. (Always wash your hands before touching your baby.)
- Talk to your baby.
- Babies calm down when they feel their mothers' hands and hear their voice.

- Once your baby is stable you are encouraged to do Kangaroo Mother Care

What is Kangaroo Mother Care? (KMC)

It is a special way of holding your baby next to your skin. Caring for a baby this way is very good.

Your baby may be able to go home sooner than usual.

How do I do Kangaroo Mother Care?

- The baby is only dressed in a nappy.
- Place baby on your chest in an upright position between your breasts.
- You and your baby must have skin-to-skin contact.
- While your baby is still getting medicine and oxygen, the nurses will help you to hold your baby in this special position for a short time each day.
- When babies do not need special medical care and are off oxygen therapy they can receive constant Kangaroo Mother Care.
- Your baby is in the upright position against your chest the whole day. Your body heat keeps baby warm - like an incubator.
- You sleep with your baby in this position.
- You only take your baby out of this position for feeds or when you wash yourself.
- It is important that you move around while your baby is in this position. The movement stimulates the baby to develop faster and better.
- A special wrap (thari) is provided in the KMC unit (ward 4) in order to tie your baby in the skin-to skin position. The staff will show you how to tie your baby correctly.
- When it is cold or your baby is very small, wrap a blanket or jacket around the two of you. Put a hat on baby's head.

Breastfeeding

If your baby is too small or too weak to suck from the nipple, you should express your breast milk. The nurses will help you with this.

- The expressed milk is given to the baby with a thin plastic tube that goes through the mouth to the tummy.
- Another way to feed your expressed milk to your baby is with a cup or syringe.
- Put your baby to the breast as soon as there are no breathing problems and your baby's condition is stable.
- Ask the nursing staff to help you if you are unsure.

Babies in the kangaroo position stimulate the breasts to produce milk. They can also feed from the breast whenever they like.

Why should I do Kangaroo Mother Care?

Kangaroo Mother Care is the best way of caring for low birth weight babies. Studies all over the world have shown this.

Benefits for your baby

- Babies stay warm against their mothers' skin much better than in an incubator.
- They don't cry as much and sleep quietly for longer periods.
- They use less energy, grow better and gain weight faster.
- They can feed any time when hungry.
- Babies usually feed sooner from the breast than babies in incubators and cots.
- Your baby will have fewer infections.
- Your baby will develop faster and better

Benefits for you

- You are able to take care of your baby yourself.
- You give your baby food, heat and shelter.
- You help your baby grow.
- You develop a close bond with your baby.
- You make more milk because your baby is close to your breasts.
- You are able to get help from the nurses to take care of your baby.
- You can talk and share experiences with mothers who have low birth weight babies just like you.
- You get a lot of practice to care for your baby.
- You will be confident to look after your baby at home.
- You will be able to take your baby home sooner than babies who are not cared for in this way.

Leaving Hospital

When can we go home?

You and your baby will be allowed to go home as soon as:

- Your baby is gaining weight every day.
- Your baby is feeding well from the breast.
- You are confident in caring for your baby in the KMC position.
- The doctor is happy that your baby is mature enough to go home.

Why should I continue with Kangaroo Mother Care at home?

Babies are still very small at discharge. They must be kept warm at all times, even in summer. They grow cold very easily. This causes them to suck poorly and lose weight. They may become ill.