

Instructions to tie the Kalafong KMC Thari (Wrap)

Procedure. The wrap is made from cotton fabric that is machine washable. The wrap has two straps on each side of a centrepiece (Figure 4, the KMC wrap). The wrapping procedure is as follows:

Step 1. Wrap the bottom straps around the back. (Fig 5)

Step 2. Cross the bottom straps at the back and bring the straps to the front just below the breasts. (Fig 6)

Step 3. Tie a square knot in front, being sure that the knot is on top of the centrepiece of fabric, which will provide a secure basis for the infant's legs and bottom. Make sure that the straps are tied just below the breasts and not around the waist because the waist level may position a small infant too low on the mother's chest, which may compromise the infant's airway (Fig 7).

Step 4. Wrap the top straps around the mother's back (Fig 8).

Step 5. Cross the top straps at the back and bring them over the shoulders toward the front (Fig 9 & 10). Let the top straps dangle in front, leaving the centrepiece top edge loose so that it creates a pouch for the infant.

Step 6. Position the infant prone inside the pouch created by the centerpiece (Fig 11). The infant's legs and arms should be flexed with the hands beside the infant's head. Gently turn the infant's head to the side if necessary. Be sure that the top edge of the centerpiece is at the midline level of the infant's ear.

Step 7. Pull the dangling top straps further forward. This action tightens the centrepiece around the infant, securing the infant up against the chest. Tie the top straps to the bottom straps. Each strap is attached to the bottom strap with its own square knot. (Fig 12 & 13).

Step 8. The wrap should be tied firmly and securely to enable the mother to release her hold on the infant so her arms are free while the infant remains safely contained. (Fig 14).

Step 9. It is important that the upper edge of the centrepiece pouch secure the infant's head at the level of the infant's ear, ensuring that a safe airway is maintained. Fig 15 shows the upper edge of the centrepiece properly positioned at the level of the infant's ear. The lower edge of the centrepiece can now be tucked into a skirt or slacks, and blouses and jackets are easily worn over the wrap.

Use of the wrap in hospital. The wraps are washed weekly and each mother receives her own wrap. No complications from the wrap itself have occurred. It is very rare for an infant to have a compromised airway with this wrapping technique, but this may occur if the mother forgets to retighten the top straps that have been loosened for feeding and repositioning of the infant. For breastfeeding, the top straps need to be loosened a bit so the infant can move onto the breast. Loosening the wrap also facilitates manual milk expression. In Continuous Kangaroo Care, the mother sleeps with her infant, in a semi- upright position on her back or side. Tying the wrap as instructed precludes knots in the back or under the arms that can cause discomfort.

The thari is made out of Polyester-cotton material. It can be machine-washed and tumble dried. Ironing – medium steam setting.



Figure 4. The KMC wrap.



Figure 5. Wrap bottom straps around back.



Figure 6. Cross bottom straps and bring to front.



Figure 7. Secure with square knot just below the breasts.



Figure 8. Wrap top straps around back.



Figure 9. Cross straps and bring over shoulders.



Figure 10. Straps crossed in back.



Figure 11. Position infant.



Figure 12. Tie top strap to bottom strap using square knot.



Figure 13. Tie other top strap to bottom strap.



Figure 14. Infant secure in KMC wrap.



Figure 15. Center piece properly positioned beneath infant's ear.

These pictures just demonstrate how the thari should be tied and how the infant should be position. A doll was used for this demonstration!

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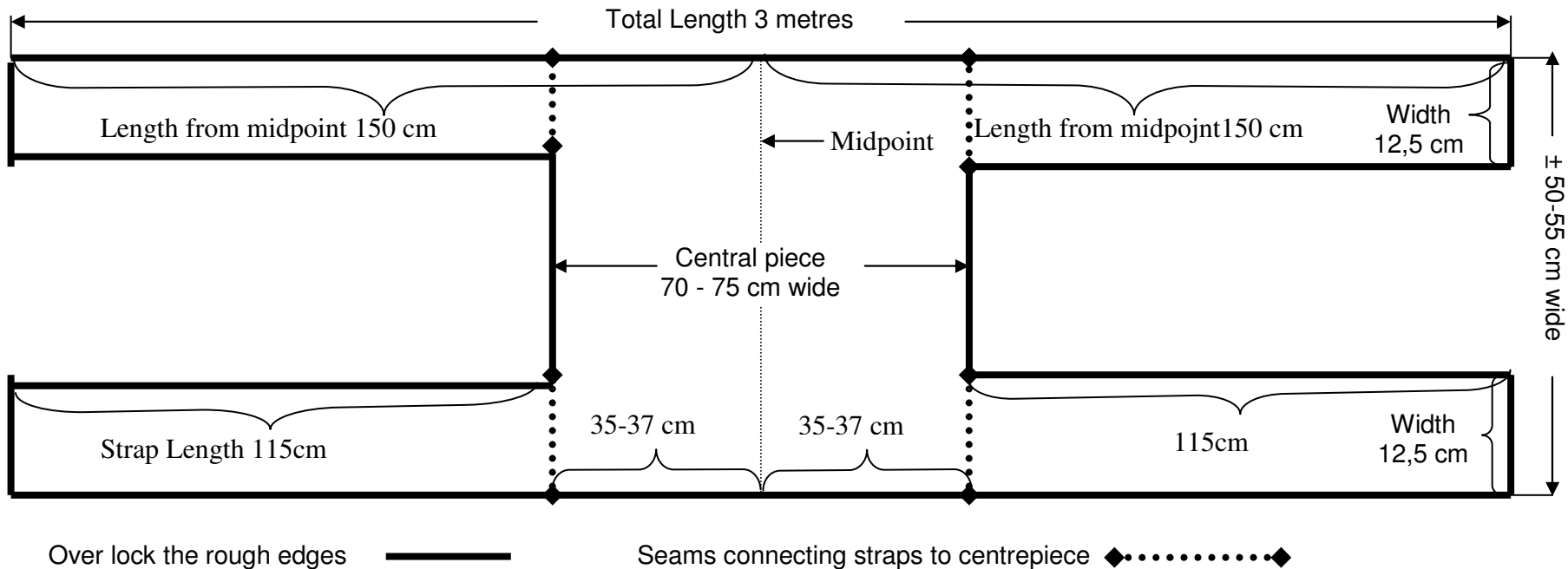
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Kangaroo Mother Care Thari Pattern

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Choices of material from which to make the Thari

Polyester Cotton: It works well and is cheap. The material tears easily and it is not necessary to cut the material with a pair of scissors. Poly cottons are usually 110 cm wide and 2 wraps can be made from 2 metres of material.

Cotton knit (t-shirt material): T-shirt material stretches a lot. It would be better to use a material that contains lycra, but lycra is very expensive.

A thin Denim material also works well, it lasts very long especially if you use it over and over in the ward, but unfortunately denim is quite expensive.

Wraps can be made from old sheets, if funds are not available to buy new material.