



The Magic of Skin-to-Skin

When is baby's first hug?

The first hug begins at birth and continues throughout the hospital stay. It occurs the first time baby spends time skin-to-skin with mommy or daddy (if mommy is unable). Skin-to-skin should continue until the first feeding, but is encouraged while you remain in the hospital. This bonding time is a once-in-a-lifetime event for you and your baby, and needs to be celebrated.

At Saint Agnes Medical Center, we promote skin-to-skin contact in the first hour of your baby's life – an uninterrupted time together. We know you are eager for your friends and family to see your baby, but we encourage you to do so after you have had this time alone.

What is skin-to-skin?

Skin-to-skin begins immediately after birth when baby is unclothed (or in a diaper) and is placed belly down, directly on mother or support person's chest. The first hour of skin-to-skin lets you and your baby get to know each other.

Why do skin-to-skin?

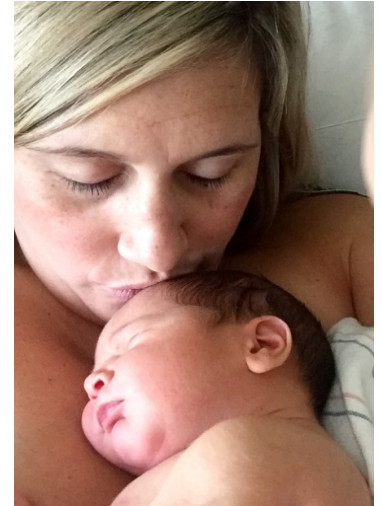
When babies are placed skin-to-skin, they are warmer, calmer and move more easily from sleeping to being awake. When baby is skin-to-skin on your chest they can hear your heartbeat, and their heart and breathing rates stabilize. Skin-to-skin gets breastfeeding off to a great start! It allows you to recognize early feeding cues, plus milk supply is increased and babies will "self-attach" to the breast easier. Babies that are held skin-to-skin cry less and have better blood sugars.

Considerations

If your baby is taken to the NICU, we encourage skin-to-skin as soon as you and your baby are stable. If you are not stable, you can have daddy or your support person bond with baby skin-to-skin.

How to do skin-to-skin

Choose a top, gown or robe that opens in the front, or take your shirt off. Remove your bra and make yourself comfortable. Put baby, undressed (except diaper), onto your chest. Put blanket over you and baby, with baby's head uncovered. Dads can snuggle, too. Remember that skin-to-skin can



continue throughout your stay in the hospital, as well as after you leave the hospital. This will have a greater effect on how you and your infant bond and relate to each other.

Our commitment to you

Our Saint Agnes team is here to support new mothers and their babies, and will help facilitate your feeding choice for your newborn. Our goal is to assist you in every way possible to ensure that you have a wonderful experience in the birth of your baby.

We highly encourage you to enjoy the power of baby's first hug during your hospital stay.

On behalf of our entire Saint Agnes family, best wishes and congratulations on the birth of your baby!



**Saint Agnes
Medical Center**

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