

## WHAT IS KANGAROO CARE?

Kangaroo Care, also known as KC, is placing your diapered baby skin-to-skin on your bare chest. It is also sometimes referred to as STS, or skin-to-skin care.

## WHO IS INTENDED FOR THIS CARE?

All babies in the NICU, big or small, can benefit from Kangaroo Care. Once a baby is stable in the NICU, Kangaroo Care can start.

## HOW WILL THIS HELP MY BABY?

Kangaroo Care can help your baby in several ways. KC can help your baby to have more regular breathing and heart rate. Your skin will regulate your baby's temperature. Your skin can also provide your baby with protection from certain infections. Your baby will be less stressed and feel less pain after doing KC. Babies who do KC will breastfeed longer, gain weight faster and go home sooner than babies who do not get KC.

## WHO CAN ADMINISTER?

Moms and dads can both do Kangaroo Care. Parents can designate a family member in their place for KC if they are not able to visit.

## WHEN CAN I START?

The sooner KC starts, the sooner your baby will benefit. Be sure to stay updated with your nurse on whether you can begin care. Babies who have certain ventilators or tubes may not be able to Kangaroo until those are removed or the baby becomes stable.

## HOW DO I KANGAROO?

1. It's best to do KC when you can spend at least an hour with a baby on your chest. Most nursing care can be done with the baby on your chest, but it's best to wait until after nursing care for you and your baby to have two or three hours without interruption.
2. Babies prefer the smell of their mom and dad over artificial smells. Be sure to be free of any perfumes or cigarette smoke, and take a shower before coming to hold your baby.
3. It's important not to interrupt your Kangaroo Care time with your baby. You should use the bathroom, have something to eat, and make any necessary phone calls before starting.
4. Remove your bra and clothing above the waist. Your nurse can give you a Kangaroo wrap to put on to help hold your baby in place. This will allow your arms to relax during care.



*(continued on back)*

5. Make sure your baby's diaper is clean and dry.
6. Your nurse can help you place your baby upright on your chest between your breasts with his or her head turned to the side. Your baby's legs should be tucked up with a blanket placed across his/her back.
7. Then sit back and recline in a Kangaroo chair. If you want to be able to see your baby's face, you can place a mirror on the chair to see him/her sleeping.
8. Doing KC with your baby for at least 60 minutes daily is encouraged. There is no limit though to the number of hours you can Kangaroo. If you cannot visit every day, ANY Kangaroo Care would be beneficial for your baby.
9. Pump your breasts right after Kangaroo Care. You will often find you pump more milk then.
10. Ask for one of our certified Kangaroo Care nurses to answer any questions you have.



# DO YOU KANGAROO?

A PARENT GUIDE TO  
KANGAROO CARE  
IN THE NICU

