

Skin to Skin - warm, calm and comforted

Patient information sheet

Welcome to the Southern Adelaide Health Network. This information sheet is designed to answer any questions you may have about the importance of skin to skin contact with your baby immediately after birth.

Holding your baby naked, onto your skin, immediately after birth has many health benefits for you and your baby. That is why skin to skin is our standard of care here at Flinders Medical Centre.

Bonding

Helping your baby adjust to life outside the womb

- Skin to skin is a special period of closeness
- Allows your attachment to grow and your bond to develop

Reducing Stress and Anxiety

Calming and relaxing for both parent and baby

- Babies who receive skin to skin cry less
- Skin to skin regulates your baby's heart rate, breathing rate and stabilises blood sugar levels
- Reducing periods of separation between parent and baby may help to reduce postnatal depression

Feeding

Promotes instinctive feeding behaviours

- Stimulates baby's digestion and an interest in their first breast, or formula feed
- Increases the production of hormones required to produce milk
- Helps you to learn your baby's feeding cues
- Feeding becomes more instinctive as your baby naturally finds the breast

Transfer of Friendly Bacteria

Building your baby's immune system

- Baby shares the natural bacteria on your skin
- Builds early protection against infection

Stabilising Temperature

Helps to keep your baby at just the right temperature



Frequently Asked Questions

Can I perform skin to skin if I have a caesarean section?

Yes! Skin to skin will be offered regardless of how you birth, as long as you are both well enough to do it. Alternative options will be discussed with you at the time, if immediate skin to skin cannot occur.

I plan to formula feed, should I still do skin to skin?

Yes! Skin to skin has lots of benefits such as bonding and reducing stress and anxiety for you both.

Is skin to skin safe?

Normal observations and care of your baby will continue to take place and attention will be taken to keep your baby warm. If you or your partner have any concerns about your baby, then alert staff immediately.

Can my birth partner perform skin to skin?

Yes! We can support skin to skin with your birth partner as long as your care providers agree that it is a safe time to do this.

Where can I find more information?



UNICEF



Australian Breastfeeding Association