

Skin to Skin Contact with Your Baby After Birth

St George and Sutherland Hospitals

There are some important points you need to know for the health and safety of you and your baby

Skin to skin contact of baby with mother immediately after birth can be helpful to your baby's health and your baby's first breast feed.

After a vaginal birth, your baby will be placed on your chest, lying on their stomach between your breasts with their head turned to the side, covered with a blanket. We encourage your partner or support person to stay and not to leave your side while baby is with you in the hours after birth.

If your baby is born by caesarean section, and you and your baby are well after birth, your baby will be placed on your chest with you in the operating theatre or the recovery ward. They may have a hat on and their head turned to the side with their face clear. The midwife will stay with you, but we also encourage your partner or support person to stay and not to leave your side while baby is with you in the hours after birth.

The midwife will ensure you and your baby are well and help both you and your partner to recognise when your baby is ready to breastfeed, offering help when needed. This close skin to skin contact will help your baby maintain their temperature, keep their heart rate and breathing normal, and will encourage baby to start to breastfeed. Our staff will show you how to make sure your baby is well.

Call for staff immediately if you are concerned about baby.



If you are separated from your baby after birth, your partner or support person will be offered a quiet place to have skin to skin contact whilst waiting for you. This contact with your partner is still very beneficial to the health of your baby.

If your baby is admitted to our Special Care Nursery after birth, you will be shown how you can have regular skin to skin contact with your baby. This is called Kangaroo Care and is helpful to your baby's health and improves breastfeeding outcomes.

Skin to skin contact with your baby is not only for straight after birth. Holding baby skin to skin in the early days and weeks continues to be valuable and helps with bonding and breastfeeding. This is something both you and your partner can do.

Professional interpreters are available if you need help understanding or speaking English. Interpreter services are free and confidential. Please ask the staff if you would like an interpreter.