



MINISTRY OF HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

SKIN-TO-SKIN

FIRST
BREAST FEEDING

ROOMING-IN
OF MOTHER
AND NEWBORN



Skin-to-skin and first breast feeding

WHO and UNICEF recommend immediate and uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact and initiation of breastfeeding the time immediately following birth (The Golden Hour) and continue uninterrupted for at least 60 minutes or until the completion of the first breastfeeding.

The direct and uninterrupted contact of the newborn with the mother's skin, facilitates the natural reflex of searching for the breast and the breastfeeding.

Both immediate skin-to-skin contact and early first breastfeeding are key principles for the successful establishment of breastfeeding.

These two interventions are closely related and must be performed as soon as possible after childbirth for optimal benefit.

Following a caesarean section with local anaesthesia (epidural), immediate skin-to-skin care and initiation of breastfeeding is feasible.

After a caesarean section with general anaesthesia, skin-to-skin contact and initiation of breastfeeding can begin when the mother is sufficiently alert to hold the infant.

Otherwise, mother should still be supported by specially trained staff, to provide skin-to-skin contact and to breastfeed as soon as she is able. Alternatively contact with the father also helps the infant move more smoothly into extra-uterine life.





SKIN-TO-SKIN CONTACT

- establishes the mother-newborn bond that lasts a lifetime
- makes baby stop crying
- makes the baby feel calm and safe
- helps regulate temperature, respiration, glucose, and heart function of the newborn
- strengthens the immune system by colonization by beneficial microorganisms
- contributes to the establishment of breastfeeding

So instinctively and almost crawling, the newborn moves to his/her mother's breast to begin first breastfeeding, guided by his/her sense of smell when he/she desires it.

After skin contact and first breastfeeding, the baby can sleep for up to 8 hours without the risk of dehydration, since his/her body goes through a recovery phase and calms down after the birth. At the same time, the mother has the opportunity to calm down and rest during this time.

Skin-to-skin contact is good to continue throughout the stay of the mother and newborn, not only in the birthing room but also in the maternity ward. This is also one of the reasons why the mother-newborn rooming-in is considered important.

Mother-newborn rooming-in

TOGETHER FROM THE FIRST MOMENT AND ONWARDS

WHO and UNICEF consider rooming-in (mother and infant being together day and night, 24 hours a day), as one of the important steps in establishing and succeeding breastfeeding.

Rooming-in offers the possibility of constant contact between mother and baby from the first moment of birth, which helps them build their relationship and strengthens the emotional bond between them. At the same time, it builds solid foundations for a healthy breastfeeding baby.

THE BABY ...

- Constantly feels his/her mother, so the mother-infant bond is built and strengthened
- Is calm, feels safe
- Breastfeeds the moment is hungry and gets the amount he/she needs, so breastfeeding is successfully established
- Learns to recognize his/her mother
- Is protected from infections (visitors should be limited)

THE MOTHER ...

- Feels more confident and able to take care of her baby, has more self-confidence, compared to mothers who did not experience rooming-in with their newborn
- Learns to recognize her baby's hunger signs
- Produces enough prolactin and oxytocin hormones so as to produce the amount of milk the baby needs



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