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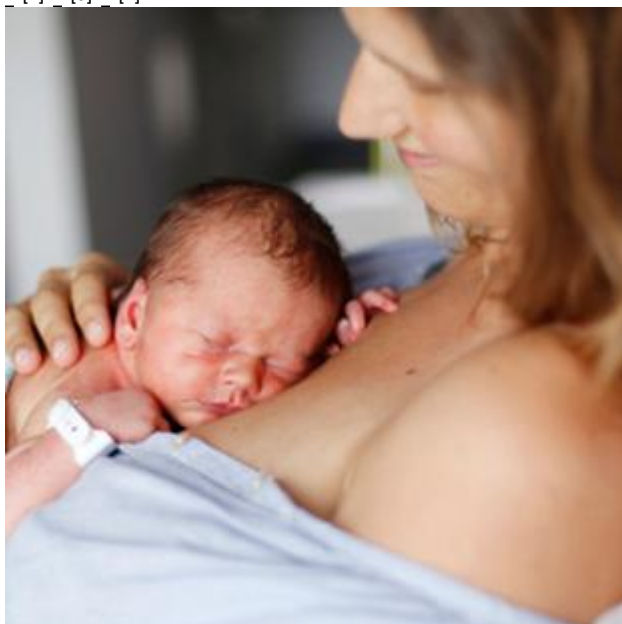


## Kangaroo care: How to take care of your preterm baby

What is kangaroo care and how can it help you to take care of your preterm baby? Find out about kangaroo care benefits, from helping with premature baby feeding problems to encouraging dad and baby skin-to-skin bonding, whether you're in hospital or at home.

<https://www.nestlebaby.ca/en/kangaroo-care-preterm-babies> <sup>[1]</sup>

[\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#) [\[4\]](#)



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# baby

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Thursday, November 12th, 2020


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Holding your baby in your arms for the first time is one of the most special moments for new parents—and you'll no doubt never want to let go. Skin-to-skin contact between mom and baby is hugely important for bonding and can also help if you're struggling with premature baby feeding problems by encouraging breastfeeding. But what if your baby arrived earlier than planned? If your baby was born preterm (before 37 weeks) or has a low birth weight (less than 5lb 5oz or 2500g), then the first few days and weeks after birth were likely different than what you had pictured. This is because premature babies normally have to stay in the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), under special treatment, for several weeks or even months. This can be an extremely stressful and emotional period for parents as you worry about your baby's health and may feel you're missing out on precious time spent getting to know your newborn.

## What is kangaroo care?

Kangaroo care is a way of holding your premature baby skin-to-skin on your chest. Similar to how kangaroos carry their babies in their pouch, you put your naked baby (except for a diaper and maybe a cap) upright against your bare chest. A wrap is often used to secure the baby. Kangaroo care was developed in South America as an alternative approach to care for premature babies, who didn't have access to incubators in the NICU. The skin-to-skin care has many positive benefits for your baby that will persist after you are discharged from the NICU. Kangaroo care is also a great way for mothers and families to bond with their preemie, and it helps to decrease maternal anxiety and depression. Depending on how you and your little hero are feeling, you may want to spend several hours a day kangarooing. Ask your healthcare team when you can start this. They will also be able to help you get your baby out of the incubator and handle the tubes in the early days.

# HOW KANGAROO CARE BENEFITS YOUR LITTLE HERO



Using the kangaroo hold so you can have skin-to-skin contact with your preterm baby is a special, sensory experience bringing many benefits through touch, sound, and smell—for both parent and child.

## 1. Baby feels