

Kangaroo Care In The NICU

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BACKGROUND

Kangaroo Care (KC) or skin to skin care is an evidenced based method to reduce morbidity and mortality in neonatal intensive care (NICU) infants and a mainstay of family centered developmental care. It was first discovered in Bogota, Columbia where overcrowded nurseries, a lack of equipment and inadequate staffing led to high infant mortality and infection rates.

PURPOSE

Neonates in the NICU are separated from their parents immediately after birth. KC is a safe way for infants to have physical contact with their mother or father and provides emotional and physiological benefits.

METHODS

An infant wearing only a diaper is placed skin to skin on mom or dad's bare chest. Parents are encouraged to wear a shirt that opens in front or we can offer them a gown that opens in front. Position a chair close to infant's bed area. Depending on which lines and tubes baby has, this may be a two-person procedure. Lines and tubes are secured with tape. A warm blanket is placed over infant. Evidence based guidelines recommend 60 minutes of uninterrupted KC during a full sleep cycle to promote brain development.

The Benefits of Kangaroo Care



RESULTS

- Positive emotional wellbeing in mother
- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Supports infant bonding
- Improved neurodevelopmental outcomes
- Improvement in the quantity of quiet sleep, improvement in sleep cycles and a decrease in arousal from sleep
- Infants are more alert and observant and spend less time crying.
- Stabilization of neonates heart rate, respirations and saturation levels with decreased apneic episodes
- Reduction of hospital associated infections in neonate
- Improved breastfeeding rates and increased milk production in mother.
- Promotes neonatal weight gain
- Earlier hospital discharge

CONCLUSIONS

Skin to skin care has been shown to improve breastfeeding, milk production, parental satisfaction and bonding. Parents overall NICU experience is enhanced by being able to participate in Kangaroo care.

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