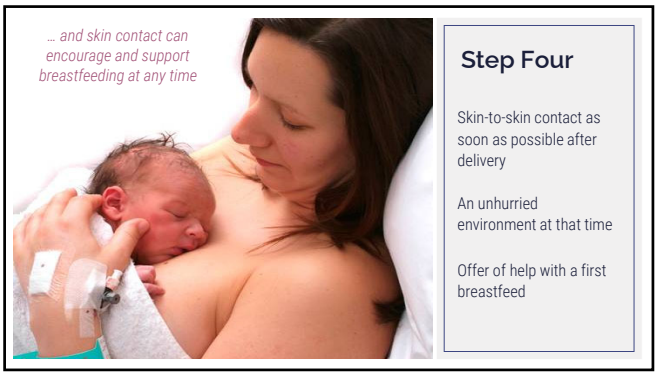
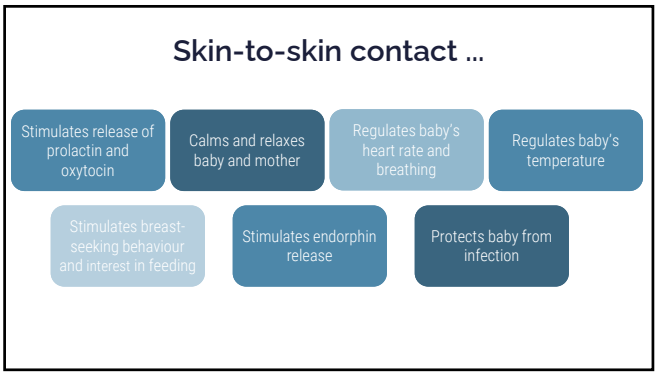

Skin-to-skin contact
Why skin contact is so important




Thermal regulation
Regulates heart rate
Regulates respiration rates in the baby
Elicits a strong hormonal response in the mother
Promotes early development of the maternal/infant bond.
Helps with early initiation of breastfeeding
Skin-to-skin


... and skin contact can encourage and support breastfeeding at any time
Step Four
Skin-to-skin contact as soon as possible after delivery
An unhurried environment at that time
Offer of help with a first breastfeed


Skin-to-skin contact
Baby is dried and placed naked (or in a nappy) directly on to the nursing parents chest.
Warm towels and blankets are placed over them to maintain temperature.


Skin-to-skin contact ...
Stimulates release of prolactin and oxytocin
Calms and relaxes baby and mother
Regulates baby's heart rate and breathing
Regulates baby's temperature
Stimulates breast-seeking behaviour and interest in feeding
Stimulates endorphin release
Protects baby from infection



SHARED INSTINCTS

All mammals have a set sequence of behaviours that lead to initiation and maintenance of breastfeeding.

Human beings are no different!

Instinctive Newborn Behaviour



Pictures of the 9 stages ©Healthy Children Project, Inc.

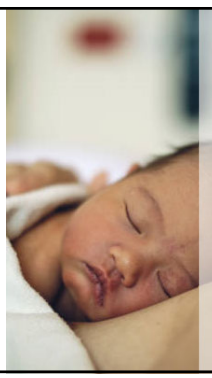


Flat Nipple

Inverted Nipple







Skin contact and a laid-back position …

… enhances all baby's natural reflexes

Why skin to skin may not happen?

Procedures get in the way!

Problems and Solutions

Mother requires suturing	Partner feels left out	Belief that baby could get cold
Mother can cuddle baby while being sutured	This should be discussed before delivery	Education (Mother's core temp)

Problems and Solutions

The baby needs to be weighed	The baby needs to be checked	They need to be transferred to another ward
Weighing should happen early, or late	This can take place whilst the baby is skin-to-skin	Mother and baby can be transferred together







