



The Golden Hour

Sleep

The final stage is sleep. The baby and sometimes the mother fall into a restful sleep. Babies usually fall asleep about 1½ to 2 hours after birth

The first hours after birth are a developmentally distinct time for your newborn! There are well-documented short and long-term physical and psychological benefits to holding your baby skin-to-skin uninterrupted during this time. No matter how or where you give birth, or plan to feed your newborn, your baby benefits from skin-to-skin during the first hour after birth and beyond!

How to:

You and your baby are covered with a blanket. The baby's head stays out. The baby is naked and not wrapped. You and your baby will rest skin-to-skin for an hour or two after birth. This is a special time for you and your baby. **Necessary procedures and checks are done with the mother and baby skin-to-skin.**

Birth Cry

The Birth cry is a distinctive cry that occurs immediately after birth as the baby's lungs expand for the first time.

Relaxation

The relaxation stage starts after the birth cry ends, marked by no mouth movements and relaxed hands. The baby is skin-to-skin with the mother and covered with a warm towel or blanket.

Suckling

The suckling stage occurs when a newborn attaches to the nipple and begins breastfeeding, typically starting an hour after birth. However, if the mother received analgesia or anesthesia during labor, it may take longer for the baby to begin suckling after skin-to-skin contact.

The Magic of Skin-to-skin

- Regulates baby's body temperature.
- Calms baby's nervous system.
- Heart and breathing rates are normalized.
- Milk supply may be improved.
- Other family members can hold and bond with baby through skin-to-skin contact too.
- Skin-to-skin IS possible for cesarean births.

If there are medical reasons that prevent skin-to-skin immediately after birth, start as soon as possible. If you are on medications or anything that might impair your strength or ability to stay awake while holding your baby, be sure someone else can help you care for the baby and hold the baby skin to skin.

Awakening

The awakening stage occurs about 3 minutes after birth, where the newborn shows small movements in the head and shoulders. During this stage, the baby may move its head, open its eyes, display mouth activity, and shift its shoulders.

Familiarization

The familiarization stage occurs about 45 minutes after birth, lasting over 20 minutes, during which the newborn licks the nipple and touches the mother's breast to bond.

Crawling

During the crawling phase, the baby makes short movements toward the breast, resulting in reaching the nipple. This stage typically starts around 35 minutes post-birth.

Rest

A baby may rest at any time, with periods of rest occurring between activity during the first hour after birth.

Activity

The activity stage, occurring about 8 minutes after birth, involves increased mouthing and sucking movements as the rooting reflex becomes more apparent.