

**Impact of Skin-to-Skin Contact After Birth: Literature Review**

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N434: Evidence-Based Practice

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July 10, 2025

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Within the nursing profession, a vital component that establishes and directs data and information for the best practices to be initiated is the work of research. More specifically, an extremely important topic related to the mother and baby unit in the healthcare field is the impact of skin-to-skin contact after birth, as well as its ongoing research and effectiveness. For that reason, this literature review focuses on recognizing three qualitative study articles that discuss the benefits and drawbacks of research analysis for the impact that skin-to-skin contact after birth on both the mother and infant. The main objective of the literature review is to offer a thorough examination of the existing knowledge and deficiencies surrounding a particular topic, and it serves as the basis for future study and ultimately, patient care (Houser, 2023). The purpose of the literature review is a crucial step in the research process and can help the healthcare team stay attentive to fresh findings from numerous sources (Houser, 2023). Literature review is an area that is suitable for an exploratory or interventional study and is created by a knowledge gap in a healthcare issue, which also indicates that the researcher is leading the way in a new area of study (Houser, 2023). It can also be the foundation for more in-depth scholarly research and raises the possibility of publication and is the first stage in determining the significance of a research question and possible methods of study (Houser, 2023). This literature review specifically seeks to emphasize the impact of skin-to-skin contact after birth and the effects it has on the mother and the baby.

### **“Skin-to-skin contact after birth: Developing a research and practice guideline”**

This qualitative study investigated research done by the professionals who establish and assess health policies and practices pertaining to skin-to-skin contact between a mother and her

newborn in the initial hours following delivery in any context (Brimdyr et al., 2023). This guideline is meant to offer evidence-based suggestions pertaining to skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth and the benefits that come with this specific action, which is very crucial after the woman completes the birthing process (Brimdyr et al., 2023). Within this qualitative article, it is told that the Skin-to-Skin Clinical Guidelines Development Project navigated the challenge of developing guidelines by using a recognized procedure, the World Health Organization (WHO) Handbook for Guideline Development (Brimdyr et al., 2023). As an evidence-based best practice, skin-to-skin contact as soon as possible after delivery is known to benefit both short- and long-term health outcomes, including lower infant mortality (Brimdyr et al., 2023). In a short summary, the results of this study found that following all delivery methods, the World Health Organization's guidelines development process concluded that all women and all babies should have immediate, continuous, uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact as the standard of care (Brimdyr et al., 2023).

### **Key Points**

Correlating to skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth, breastfeeding is a component that can be affected by the action of skin-to-skin contact. This study reported the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews published a review that consisted of thirty-eight trials (Brimdyr et al., 2023). Skin-to-skin contact within the first hour is positively correlated with the success and duration of the first attempt of breastfeeding as well as the probability of exclusive breastfeeding for three to six months, corresponding to recent systematic reviews and meta-analyses (Brimdyr et al., 2023). Studies on the impact of skin-to-skin contact on an infant's sucking behavior have shown that it has a good effect on both latching and sucking behaviors (Brimdyr et al., 2023). As

far as the effect on the mother, it has been shown that skin-to-skin contact improves mothers' favorable perceptions of breastfeeding and their breastfeeding self-efficacy (Brimdyr et al., 2023).

Additionally, according to the research, in the first hour after giving birth, skin-to-skin contact reduced post-traumatic stress disorder in women who have had difficult birth experiences, lowered the chance of early maternal depression and bonding issues, and reduced maternal anxiety (Brimdyr et al., 2023). An analysis was also shown that comfort, oxytocin, and antioxidant levels rose while maternal stress levels decreased in the event of the immediate skin-to-skin contact (Brimdyr et al., 2023). The incidence of abrupt unexpected infant death within six days of delivery was found to decrease simultaneously with the broad adoption of skin-to-skin contact throughout time (Brimdyr et al., 2023). The intervention group, which was placed skin-to-skin as soon as possible after birth, before stabilization, and then continued in kangaroo care, had a lower mortality rate at twenty-eight days compared to those who received conventional care, according to a randomized controlled trial that studied over 3000 infants with birth weights ranging from 1.0 to 1.799 kg (Brimdyr et al., 2023). In fact, in response to the data, skin-to-skin contact has also been demonstrated to reduce neonatal transfers to the NICU and hospital admissions (Brimdyr et al., 2023).

After the evidence was critically evaluated and methodologically synthesized, a draft of the guidelines was created and provided to the members of the Expert Panel for external evaluation (Brimdyr et al., 2023). The Expert Panel met in person from October 28 to October 31, 2022, after receiving feedback and revising the draft to include the recommendations (Brimdyr et al., 2023). Members from eleven different nations who have professional and research experience in

a variety of settings, including neonatal facilities and along the birth and community childbearing chronology, made up the Expert Panel (Brimdyr et al., 2023). MDs, PhDs, JDs, and DNPs were among the credentials, and the panelists included lactation care professionals, university teachers, researchers, anthropologists, midwives, nurses, neonatologists, public health professionals, doulas, nutritionists, and obstetricians (Brimdyr et al., 2023).

After discussing the systematic review team's foundational research in small groups, members unanimously recommended using the Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development, and Evaluation (GRADE) classification for evidence quality: B is moderate; C is low; D is very low; and A is high (Brimdyr et al., 2023). There was consensus on the overall level of evidence and ideal wording for each element of the guideline due to the extensive group discussions that followed. Each member of the Expert Panel received a copy of the guideline after the meeting ended, and they all went over it and gave their opinions (Brimdyr et al., 2023).

The results of this study included information that skin-to-skin contact at birth is appropriate for all mothers and babies throughout the world (Brimdyr et al., 2023). Adding on to that, before the cord is clamped, the newborn should be placed straight onto the mother's naked chest or abdomen, and it is recommended that the infant be placed prone (Brimdyr et al., 2023). The results also stated that skin-to-skin contact is acceptable following all birth modalities, and family members or workers should watch but not interfere during the mother and baby's peaceful skin-to-skin contact (Brimdyr et al., 2023). For the first hour, routine procedures like weighing, eye care, and screenings can be safely delayed, and tasks like vital signs and Apgar scoring can be done while on the mother's body (Brimdyr et al., 2023). It can be stated that delaying unnecessary regular care in favor of prolonged skin-to-skin contact after delivery is safe and

permits neonates to develop through their natural behaviors, and overall, skin-to-skin contact after birth is both beneficial and effective to both the mother and baby (Brimdyr et al., 2023).

### **Assumptions**

The underlying assumption that can be made from the authors about this qualitative study is that skin-to-skin contact after birth has many beneficial impacts that can happen to both the mother and baby (Brimdyr et al., 2023). The target audience is said to be healthcare professionals, policy makers, administrators, managers, researchers, educators, and practitioners whose practice involves families that have children (Brimdyr et al., 2023). With this, the researchers include in this study the correct knowledge on this topic to educate all the specific people involved, which can improve outcomes for both the mother and baby and make work easier for the healthcare team (Brimdyr et al., 2023).

### **Deficit/Conclusion**

The authors of this qualitative study have a logical line of reasoning. By providing this study, valid information and facts about the impacts of skin-to-skin contact are made available to the public, which can ultimately promote this practice to improve outcomes for both mother and baby after birth (Brimdyr et al., 2023). Breastfeeding, mental health effects such as post-traumatic stress, maternal depression, maternal anxiety, along with bonding issues, were all positively affected after the skin-to-skin contact was completed (Brimdyr et al., 2023). This study is highly beneficial to the nursing field, as it provides evidence-based facts on the effects of skin-to-skin contact on both the mother and baby (Brimdyr et al., 2023). If the nursing

profession does not acknowledge this specific task, mothers and infants could have a greater risk of complications after birth and in the long run. Healthcare professionals involved should encourage and complete skin-to-skin contact due to the everlasting well-being of both the mother, baby, and their comforting bond.

## References

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