

Review Paper:

The Effect of Kangaroo Care on Physical and Mental Health Of Infants: A Review



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ABSTRACT

Background: Kangaroo care is the infant's skin-to-skin contact with the mother and vertically placement between mother's breasts. The aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of Kangaroo care on promotion of infants' health status.

Methods: This study is a narrative review. The search was conducted among related papers indexed in PubMed, Google Scholar, WHO, Barakat Knowledge Network System, ScienceDirect and Scopus databases and then, 42 papers were selected for the review.

Results: The findings are summarized in three categories: 1. Increased breastfeeding rate: Kangaroo care increases both breastfeeding rate and production of breast milk during the hospitalization period and after discharge; 2. Enhanced five senses: The babies feel their mother's body temperature through skin-to-skin contact (touch sense), listening to their mother's voice and heart beat (hearing sense), sucking their mother's breast (taste sense), establishing eye contact with their mother (sight sense), and feel the smell of their mother (smell sense); 3. Psychological advantages: Kangaroo care not only helps to improve the baby's mental status, but also helps mothers experience less stress while providing the kangaroo care. Mothers prefer skin-to-skin contact via the conventional care and believe that it makes them be more relaxed, self-confident, self-satisfied and self-empowered. Fathers also feel more relaxed, emotionally attached to their baby while proving such care. These babies can become individuals with more positive social personalities in the future.

Conclusions: Kangaroo care has a significant effect on children's physical/mental health status. Hence, parents can use this method to promote the health of their babies.

Keywords: Kangaroo care, Children, Mental health, Physical health
