

NICU Cuddler Program

About the Program

When babies are born, their brains are still growing and developing. When a baby is born premature, brain growth is affected not only by medical issues, but also by sensory (touch) experiences. For this reason, providing NICU patients with positive sensory experiences is very important. This is where Kangaroo Care comes in.

What is Kangaroo Care?

Kangaroo Care is simply skin-to-skin contact (on your chest) between you and your baby. This method has very positive effects for the baby and the parent in the short and long term.

Sometimes a parent cannot be present in the NICU. If this happens, we can still provide babies with a very positive sensory experience with cuddling.

Cuddling does not replace Kangaroo Care but complements it when parents are not present.

Who are Cuddlers?

Cuddlers:

1. Are volunteers who are specially trained to provide this type of care. They cuddle your baby but **do not** do skin-to-skin.
2. Will cuddle only medically stable babies.
3. Understand the importance of cuddling and are dedicated to NICU patients.
4. Are available daily, usually from 9:00am to 7:00pm.



Parents must provide consent/permission for baby cuddling. Once you have given consent, this teddy bear sign will be placed on the door of your baby's room. Talk to your bedside nurse if you would like to give consent for baby cuddling.