

Swaddling

Leaflet **5**



A set of 11 leaflets

- ① The swaddled bath
- ② Kangaroo care
- ③ Touch
- ④ Diaper change
- ⑤ Swaddling
- ⑥ Soothing Methods
- ⑦ Holding/carrying
- ⑧ Transfers
- ⑨ Positioning
- ⑩ Massage
- ⑪ Cue-based feeding



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Swaddling allows your baby to feel a reassuring touch on his/her body: the blanket surrounds and contains him/her as did the uterus and the amniotic fluid in the mother's womb.

The main principles of swaddling:

1. The arms and legs are bent and close to the body to reproduce the foetal tucked-in position, which makes your baby feel secure.
2. The hands are close to the mouth, as this position makes it easier for your baby **to calm himself/herself down**.
3. The blanket must allow certain movements: the goal is not to limit your baby's movements, but simply to offer him/her a physical barrier and reassuring contact.

The two types of swaddling

Complete swaddling

Your baby's body is completely wrapped in the blanket, except for the head. This type of swaddling may be indicated when you hold your baby, give him a swaddled bath or she/he is undergoing a procedure. Ensure that there is not too much equipment around your baby.

Partial swaddling

Depending on the care to be provided, your baby's upper or lower body is wrapped in the blanket accordingly. For example, if a heel prick or a diaper change is planned, swaddling the upper body can help your baby stay organized. During sleep, if your baby has small twitches in his/her legs or doesn't have an IV on his/her feet, partial swaddling of the lower body may be soothing for him/her.

Check with the nurse to find out what type of swaddling is right for your baby. If your baby has multiple IVs or more equipment is needed for his/her care, swaddling may not be possible. Rest assured, there are other ways to reassure your baby.

Swaddling

How to swaddle your baby

Before

1. Obtain a neonatal unit blanket or bring a blanket from home if neonatal unit policies allow it.
2. Place the blanket in the incubator for a few minutes to warm it up. If your baby is in a crib, this precaution is not necessary.

During

- Fold the top of the blanket to form a small triangle. This part will be placed at the level of your baby's neck.
- Using **facilitated tucking/containment method**, put your baby in a foetal tucked-in position and move him/her on to the blanket. Avoid lifting so as **not to create stress**.
- Place your baby's hands close to his/her face with arms bent, and fold one side of the blanket over him/her, securing it lightly under him/her. In this position, the blanket covers your baby's hands. If you are worried that your baby will pull on a tube placed in his/her mouth or nose, you can put small mittens on him/her.
- Fold the bottom of the blanket over your baby's body.
- Fold the other side of the blanket over him/her.

Leaflet 8

Leaflet 6

After

1. Take the time to tell your baby that the swaddling is finished (if tolerated, of course).
2. Be sure to apply **soothing methods** for the next few minutes to allow your baby time to reorganize and fall asleep slowly/gradually.
3. Remove your hands **gradually** so that your baby still feels your touch as he/she relaxes and falls asleep.

Leaflet 6