

The Magic Hour

Your Baby's First Skin-to-Skin Connection

What Is the Magic Hour?

The "**magic hour**" (also called the "golden hour") is the first hour after your baby is born. During this time, your naked baby is placed directly on your bare chest—skin against skin—and stays there without interruption.

This simple act is one of the most powerful things you can do for your baby and for your breastfeeding journey. It is recommended by the **WHO, UNICEF, AAP, and ACOG** for at least the first hour after birth.

Why Is It So Important?

During the magic hour, your baby's body is adjusting to life outside the womb. Skin-to-skin contact helps with this transition in several key ways:



Regulates Temperature: Your chest naturally regulates your baby's body temperature even better than a warmer or blanket alone.



Stabilizes Vitals: The sound of your heartbeat and the rhythm of your breathing help your baby's heart rate and breathing settle into a steady pattern.



Healthy Blood Sugar: Babies who have skin-to-skin contact tend to have more stable blood sugar levels in the hours after birth.



Reduces Stress: Skin-to-skin babies cry less and show fewer signs of stress compared to those who are separated.



Jumpstarts Breastfeeding: Babies instinctively begin to root, crawl, and attempt to latch, which signals your body to start making milk.

What Happens During the Magic Hour?

- **Rest and recovery:** A few quiet moments to adjust after birth.
- **Awakening:** Small movements begin as your baby becomes more alert.
- **Rooting and searching:** Turning their head and looking for the breast.
- **Crawling:** Newborns can use small pushing movements with their legs to move toward the breast.

- **Latching and feeding:** Many babies find and latch on their own during this first hour.

Special Circumstances

C-Section Births

Skin-to-skin is possible after both vaginal and cesarean births. Let your birth team know ahead of time. Many hospitals can place your baby on your chest in the operating room or in recovery.

Routine Procedures

Non-urgent procedures—weighing, measuring, vitamin K, and eye ointment—can safely be delayed.

Bathing can even be delayed until at least 12 hours after birth to improve breastfeeding success.

Questions?

To schedule a lactation consult with your **Certified Breastfeeding Specialist:**

Melissa Horton PA-C

Lactation Specialist

(847) 808-8884

The benefits of the magic hour last beyond the first day, building a strong emotional bond and supporting long-term breastfeeding.