

Maternal Perceptions of Skin-To-Skin Contact and Breastfeeding Practices Before and After Healthcare Provider Education and Implementation Initiative

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Abstract: Background

Skin-to-skin care (SSC) starting immediately after birth is a new practice being implemented to improve mother-newborn care. SSC correlates with greater initiation, exclusivity, and duration of breastfeeding. However, longstanding hospital practices of separating mother and newborn for infant care are barriers to adopting SSC. Studies indicate healthcare providers' (HCPs) perceptions, attitudes and support influence SSC implementation and rates of breastfeeding initiation, exclusivity, and duration.

Purpose

To compare

- 1) Maternal perceptions and practice of Birth SSC and breastfeeding, and
- 2) Maternal reports of SSC support and breastfeeding initiation, exclusivity, and duration before and after HCP SSC and breastfeeding education program.

Process Secondary analysis of surveys eliciting maternal perceptions of HCPs' attitudes, support and practice of Birth SSC and breastfeeding before and after a 4 hour SSC and breastfeeding education session and official implementation of Birth SSC.

Sample

A convenience sample of breastfeeding mothers who birthed normally at a community hospital in northeast Ohio between June 2008 and June 2009.

Conclusions

Even though evaluation was done while HCPs were completing required education, significantly more mothers did some SSC after implementation date. Further evaluation is needed after HCP education is completed and Birth SSC is fully implemented.

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