

Sex differences in newborn interaction with mother or father during skin-to-skin contact after Caesarean section.

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Source

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Abstract

AIM:

To investigate differences between the breast-seeking and crying behaviour of girls and boys in skin-to-skin contact (SSC) with their mother or their father after Caesarean section as well as the point-in-time for the first breastfeeding and to compare mothers' and fathers' interactive behaviour with their newborn girl or boy.

METHODS:

Twenty girls and 17 boys were randomized to 25 min of SSC with one or the other parent immediately after birth. The interaction was videotaped.

RESULTS:

Girls started rooting movements earlier than boys in SSC with either parent ($p = 0.027$). Infants started to breastfeed significantly earlier if having been in SSC with mothers compared with SSC with fathers during the first 5-30 min ($p = 0.018$). Girls cried more than boys in SSC with either parent ($p = 0.02$). Mothers used more touching behaviour towards their newborn infant than fathers ($p = 0.001$). Mothers touched girls less than boys ($p = 0.038$). Fathers directed less speech towards girls compared with boys ($p = 0.042$).

CONCLUSION:

Early mother-infant SSC immediately after Caesarean section should be promoted until the occurrence of the first breastfeed. If the mother is unable to provide SSC immediately after birth, the father-infant SSC is a valuable alternative because it enhances paternal interaction.

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