

KANGAROO MOTHER CARE AS THE PHILOSOPHY OF CARE FOR PRETERM AND LOW BIRTH WEIGHT INFANTS FOR ALL THE NEWBORNS IN THE WORLD, INCLUDING THOSE CARED FOR IN ALL NEONATAL UNITS.



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Abstract :

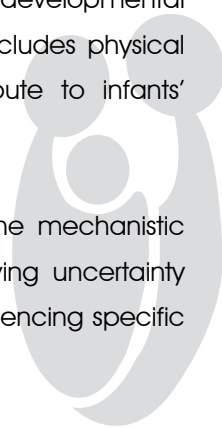
This conference gives an overview of the historical development of family-centered care in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and the importance of this model of care to a new and growing family's ability to adapt to the stress of a premature birth and parenting. While this paradigm has been developed for both term and preterm births, our focus will be predominantly oriented toward the premature and/or low birth weight context.

A premature birth is accompanied by ongoing concerns about subsequent health problems especially in very low birth weight infants where more than 40% of survivors are burdened with long-term sequelae. Based on an animal model (rodents), studies probing the stress-related effects of environmental enrichment have demonstrated that animals housed in enriched caging exhibit enhanced stress resiliency, which reduces the negative effects of both psychogenic and neurogenic stress.

Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) is an intervention used to facilitate premature and low birth weight infants' transition from intra- to extra-uterine life and to support the parental role in neonatal care. Its very first aim was to increase survival rates in low-tech countries, but this goal has rapidly been oriented toward increasing the quality of the parent-infant relationship and, ultimately, enhancing infant cognitive and neurologic competence. It is mainly founded on an old "natural" philosophy of care with particular attention to the needs surrounding premature birth. KMC is a type of developmental care centered on conditions favouring the completion of the pregnancy period. It includes physical (skin-to-skin carrying, nutrition) and psychological (affective) nutrients, which contribute to infants' maturation and homeostasis.

Conclusion:

Although clinical and epidemiological studies are informative, they do not identify the mechanistic pathways that are modulated in response to enriched environmental exposure, leaving uncertainty about how stress reduction influences biology and which pathways are important in influencing specific



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- 1) My research program deals with the social, physical and emotional development of children whose birth history is atypical. More particularly, with the children born prematurely.
- 3) Different international funding brought us to evaluate the impact of the Kangaroo Mother Care program on children development. We are presently on the way to implement this early intervention in Canadian neonatal units.
- 3) I have collaborative projects on Kangaroo Mother Care and Massage interventions with Indian researchers from Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Delhi

Some recent significant social and academic involvement

- Full professor of psychology at Université Laval, Quebec, Canada
- Member of diverse national and international scientific associations in psychology
- Invited speaker in different public organizations dedicated to Kangaroo Care and infant development
- Member of the Board of the International Kangaroo Mother Care group (INK)
- President of the 8th International Conference on Kangaroo Mother Care, held in Quebec City, June 2010
- Co-researcher of a substantial funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation (2012): "Saving the Brain in developing countries" .

