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NICU BONDING SUPPORT: SCENT CLOTHS

A scent cloth is a small transitional object that can provide a huge sense of comfort to caregivers knowing they are able to support their infant even from afar. Infants are powerfully bonded to their mothers through their familiar natural body scent that is similar to the taste of the amniotic fluid and her breast milk. Scent is also strongly tied to memory and can become familiar over time in the case of our fathers. Caregivers are encouraged to wear the small piece of cloth on their person and to transition the cloth to the infant's bed upon separation. The cloths work to provide the baby with parental scent but can also be used in the reverse where transferring baby's scent to a cloth to give to the mother can help support milk let down and pumping.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Cut two pieces of fabric approximately 6 inches square.
2. Put the pieces wrong sides together for sewing or right side together for serging. Using the marker of your choice, make a rounded edge on each corner. This will give you line for sewing or serging.

SEWING INSTRUCTIONS:

1. With fabrics **right sides together** and using a ¼" seam allowance, stitch leaving a 2-3" opening to turn the cloth right side out.
2. Turn, press, and topstitch 1/8" from the edge around the cloth.

SERGING INSTRUCTIONS:

1. With fabrics **wrong sides together**, stitch around the entire cloth using a narrow three thread overlock.
2. Secure ends by tying a knot.

GUIDELINES FOR SCENT CLOTHS DONATED TO HOSPITALS:

- Gender neutral prints and patterns are preferred so they don't get mixed up in the infant's bedding.
- The hospital is required to launder all of the scent cloths in hospital grade machines prior to use so it does need to be a sturdy material that can withstand high heat. No flannel or embellishments please.
- All items must be made using new materials in a clean work environment free from smoke and pet dander.
- All participants must wash hands with soap and water prior to handling/sewing the scent cloths.
- Please refrain from eating during assembly.