procedures, such as bathing, weighing, and heel stick. A nest constructed by placing blanket rolls underneath the bed sheet helps infants maintain an attitude of flexion when prone or side lying.

Although it must be individually adjusted, skin-to-skin contact (kangaroo care) and short periods of gentle massage can help reduce stress in preterm infants. Regular passive skin-to-skin contact between parents (mother or father) and LBW infants has been shown to alleviate stress. The parent wears a loose-fitting, open-front top, and the undressed (except for diaper) infant is placed in a vertical position on the parent's bare chest, which permits direct eye contact, skin-to-skin sensations, and close proximity (Fig. 8-10). Skin-to-skin contact between the parent and infant, in addition to being a safe and effective method for VLBW infant–parent acquaintance, can have a positive healing effect for the mother with a high-risk pregnancy. Mothers may experience psychological healing related to preterm delivery and regain the mothering role through early skin-to-skin contact with their VLBW infants. Major neonatal benefits of skin-to-skin care include a reduced risk of mortality, fewer nosocomial infections, decreased length of hospital stay, maintenance of neonatal thermal stability and oxygen saturation, increased feeding vigor, and improved growth (Conde-Agudelo, Belizán, and Diaz-Rossello, 2011; Gardner and Hernandez, 2011). In full-term newborns, skin-to-skin contact has a strong analgesic effect during procedures, such as heel lance (Cong, Ludington-Hoe, McCain, et al, 2009). LBW infants receiving skin-to-skin contact with breastfeeding mothers maintained higher oxygen saturation and were less likely to have desaturations below 90%, and their mothers were more likely to continue breastfeeding both in the hospital and for 1 month after discharge. Kangaroo care of preterm infants fosters appropriate neurobehavioral development by promoting stability of heart and respiratory function, minimizes purposeless movements, offers maternal proximity for attention, improves the infant's behavioral state, and permits self-regulating behaviors (Gardner and Hernandez, 2011).