



FIG 8-10 Father providing skin-to-skin (kangaroo) care. (Courtesy of Judy Meyr, St Louis, MO.)

Additional research studies have confirmed the beneficial effects of developmental care with preterm infants. In addition to requiring fewer days of mechanical ventilation, preterm infants who received individualized developmental care had shorter hospital stays; a significant decrease in complications, such as intraventricular hemorrhage and bronchopulmonary dysplasia; improved neurodevelopmental scores; and a decrease in feeding intolerance ([McAnulty, Duffy, Butler, et al, 2009](#)).

The arena of developmental care for preterm infants has expanded to include a wide variety of interventions, such as infant massage, soothing soft music, recordings of parents reading stories, positioning to enhance self-regulatory abilities, enhancement of hand-to-mouth activities, uninterrupted sleep periods, decreased environmental light and noise, and even the use of stuffed animals to facilitate infant positioning. As a result of such interventions, parents may perceive the NICU environment as less threatening.