



Carrying instructions

for the
elastic baby sling
for premature and
newborn babies



The wrap cross carry
for premature babies

The wrap cross carry
for newborn babies

Foreword

We are very pleased to see that you have decided to carry using our elastic baby sling.

Thanks to the intensive bodily contact provided by the sling, it is possible for parents to give their baby that special primal trust which he is familiar with from his time in the mother's womb. It is the optimum and simplest way of giving security, warmth and love without too much effort, especially for newborn babies who need such a lot of time and nearness. Premature and newborn babies stabilise themselves much quicker with skin contact. Many hospitals offer the "kangarooing" for this reason. Carrying in the premature baby sling is an optimum continuation of the advancement of all adaptation procedures and sensory organs and, at the same time, parent-child bonding, which is an important requirement for continuing the child's primal trust and the confidence of the parents in their expertise.

The elastic sling offers considerable advantages, especially for premature and newborn babies:

1. The soft grip and comfortable elasticity allow the sling to be **very simply and straightforwardly** tied.
2. The elastic sling feels just **like a second skin** and can hardly be felt. In addition to the elasticity and the resulting softness, it offers the necessary limitation without constricting. Constriction can result in levels of muscle tenseness which are too high, following the principle of "tenseness creates

counter-tenseness". The premature baby sling prevents this despite the level of limitation offered!

3. The premature baby sling is **very soft and comfortable** to carry and offers a **high level of carrying comfort**.
4. The slightly narrower width (approx. 55 cm) and the composition of the cloth have the advantage that there is **not so much material** wrapping the premature or newborn baby.
5. We recommend using **carrying types in which at least 3** cloth lengths support your baby due to the elasticity of the material.
6. We recommend the elastic cloth for carrying up to a weight of **max. 10 kg**. If the baby is larger or heavier, we recommend using the **transversely elastic-woven HOPPEDIZ®** baby sling. It is more stable during longer carrying periods and enables more carrying variations.
7. Please consult your child's doctor and/or care personnel before you carry a premature baby in a baby sling. Only carry premature babies who have stable circulation and breathing.

We do hope that you and your baby have a wonderful and intensive time in your elastic HOPPEDIZ® Baby Sling.

Your HOPPEDIZ® team

Bettina Attenberger is founder and face of the trageschule-nrw. The occupational therapist and carrying consultant has been member of the Berliner Trageschule e.V., the first ever German carrying school that was founded by Dagmar Gericke and Karin Meyer-Harms.

Ms Attenberger holds lectures and conducts cascade trainings as well as courses for midwives. It is her heartfelt wish that carrying infants and children will become

more and more popular and that even more families discover this possibility of carrying their children into life.

The carrying consultant carried both of her children for a very long time and enthusiastically teaches parents the correct way of carrying in group courses as well as individual courses. Her main focus of attention thereby lies on supporting parents and children with "special requirements".

trageschule  nrw

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Contents

1. Foreword	Page	2
2. trageschule nrw	Page	2
3. Contents	Page	3
4. ABC of warnings:	Page	2
5. Frequently asked questions and prejudices about sling carrying	Page	4/5
6. Practical experience	Page	6
7. Carrying wrongly	Page	7
8. The wrap cross-carry for premature babies (with skin contact)	Page	8 – 12
9. The wrap cross-carry for premature babies	Page	13
10. The advantages of carrying with a HOPPEDIZ® Baby Sling for babies	Page	14
11. The advantages of carrying with a HOPPEDIZ® Baby Sling for parents	Page	15
12. Closing words	Page	16

ABC of warnings:

Carrying is natural but it needs a bit of practice. Please pay attention to the following comments in order to make sure that you and your baby are safe and happy when carrying:

- A** The airways of your baby must always be free. Pay attention to that your baby's head does not fall to his / her chest and that his / her face and nose are not covered by the sling.
- B** Baby's head and back must be well supported. Have a look now and then as to whether your baby is seated well, the sling is tightly bound and the knot is still tight. You must feel well – both of you!
- C** Your balance might be influenced by the movements of your child. So please be cautious when leaning or bending forward. This carry is not suitable for sports activities.
- D** We urgently recommend to contact a healthcare professional prior to the first tying of the sling in case of infants having a low birth weight or children with physical problems.

CAUTION! KEEP THESE INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE!

The Hoppediz® baby sling is not suitable for:



The Hoppediz® baby sling is suitable for:



Frequently asked questions and prejudices about sling carrying

1. When can I start to carry my baby in a sling?

In principle, from the first day onwards as long as no illnesses or physical handicaps are apparent. If this is the case, you should discuss carrying using the sling with your doctor or physiotherapist.

2. For how long can I carry my baby in a sling?

You can carry your baby for as long as both you and your baby enjoy it. Babies will make sure you know it if they don't want to do anything any more, and you will notice yourself when you have had enough. Women who have just given birth should, however, start carrying babies in the sling for short periods only and increase the time gradually, so that no unnecessary stress is put on the pelvic floor or the caesarean scar after the birth. As long as both you and your baby want to, you can carry using the sling for up to three years (or even longer if required).

3. Can I start to carry using the sling if my baby is already a little older?

Of course! Sometimes you might find that your baby needs to get used to the new feeling of confinement. This may take a little patience from both sides. You should also increase the carrying time slowly in this case. The later you start, the heavier your baby is and your own muscular system needs to get used to the new weight distribution gradually.

4. Will the baby get enough air in the sling?

Yes, if you ensure that your baby's nose is free and that he is able to get enough "fresh" air. Your movements will also cause the air within the sling to circulate and provide replacement of fresh air. You can also read more about this subject from the "Cologne study" on our home page at the following link www.hoppediz.de/wissenswertes/faq.htm or directly at www.unikoeln.de/pi/i/2000.127.htm ("Study of oxygen intake by newborn babies in carry slings", available in German only). During the study, it was discovered that a newborn baby's oxygen intake is only approximately 1% less in a sling than it is with-

out a sling. This is because a baby in a carry sling is much quieter and can breathe in a more relaxed way.

5. Does sling carrying cause damage to the back (both baby and mother)?

An infant's back is naturally rounded and needs to stretch gradually over one or two years in order to obtain the adult S-shaped back. This is why the baby's back needs to be slightly rounded inside a taut sling (due to the spreadsquat position). This is most certainly better for the baby than a position where the back is lying straight and is "stretched", or even takes up a hollow position due to badly positioned carry slings or aids.

An infant's spinal column goes through the following stages to obtain his S-bend form:

1. The cervical vertebra stretch upwards or outwards as soon as the baby can hold his head upright.



2. The thoracic vertebra stretch when the baby can sit by himself.



3. The lumbar vertebra carry the baby when he begins to pull himself up against objects, or starts to stand and walk.



People coming from cultures where babies are more often carried actually have less back problems than we do (just a thought...). I carried Jan, our son, after he was 2 weeks old although I myself have a relatively serious curvature of the spine (scoliosis). Since my back and stomach musculature gradually got used to Jan's increasing weight, my carrying duties could be almost compared to back training. During the times in which I carried Jan regularly, I had fewer back problems or pain.

If, however, you have acute back problems such as a slipped disc or similar, you should always consult your orthopaedic specialist or physiotherapist before carrying.

6. Am I spoiling my child if I carry it too often?

No! You cannot possibly spoil a small child by carrying him, because he is only able to get your attention by crying (contact crying). The need for closeness, contact and security is one of our basic requirements and should be quite simply and naturally satisfied. At the latest when our children start to crawl or walk, they may not want to be carried in the sling so often. Their natural quest for movement and discovery becomes stronger, and it is of course much more exciting for them to go off discovering things on their own.

7. What should I pay attention to when carrying?

- a) You should only use a good quality sling (diagonal elasticity in the case of woven slings, double-stitched edge seams, tested for harmful substances).
- b) Choose a colour which you like/suits you, because a sling is also a fashion object and should match your clothing and your character. Otherwise, it could soon end up in the corner or in the cupboard.

- c) The sling should be tied tightly enough so that you do not have the feeling that you need to support or hold your baby additionally with your hands.
- d) You should only use the tying variations which correspond to the stage of your baby's development, and of these only those which you and your baby enjoy.
- e) If you have decided to carry using a sling "instinctively", then you should continue to follow your inner voice and not let yourself be led astray by the lack of knowledge or prejudices shown by others.

Practical experiences with the **Hoppediz** baby sling for premature and newborn babies

by Jutta Pipper

I am a children's nurse and breast-feeding and lactation consultant, and carried out my carrying consultancy training last year. During this time, I got to know the premature baby sling. I was immediately thrilled by the wonderful carrying comfort and material characteristics.

While I was searching for suitable carry slings for parents with premature or newborn babies, I got to know the elastic sling supplied by HOPPEDIZ®. It combines a high level of carrying comfort for parents with the exceptional elasticity of the cloth for children – a feeling of "elastic limitation". Since the dimensions are smaller than those of normal baby slings, it is extremely easy to tie even when carrying very small children.

Why is carrying and being carried, however, so important for both parents and premature babies? The answer is simple. The habitat experienced by premature babies changes drastically compared with babies "still inside the womb". They need to catch up, process and deal with an awful lot. And of course, the earlier they come into the world, the more they need to do!

The following senses are given optimum stimulation when being carried:

- balance
- deep sensibility
- vision
- hearing
- schmell
- and not forgetting the skin, the body's largest sensory organ.

At the same time the child learns to deal with these "stimuli" during bodily contact. We should never forget that the natural environment for newborn babies is the parent's body - and even more so for premature babies. Even when the baby is about to be overtaxed by all these stimuli, he is able to sleep and protect himself in the secure knowledge that he is being held.

The baby is capable of regulating his stimulus level while in bodily contact. He becomes quieter, and the parents learn a feeling of security while handling their child. They can catch up emotionally, together with their child, after a prematurely ended pregnancy and enjoy the first period of bodily contact.



Both mother and father become acquainted with handling their baby, and can also fill up the child's "chalice of primal trust".

I do hope that all babies are able to experience the feeling of being carried during their life, especially those who are premature!

Sincerely,

Yours Jutta Pipper

Children's nurse

Breast-feeding and lactation consultant (IBCLC)

WRONG!



Many parents think that they are doing their baby a favour if they carry him facing the way they are walking. Even if you have seen this being done by other sling wearers, it is wrong to do it for the following reasons:

1. The supporting cloth between the legs cannot be pulled wide enough (the spread-squat position is not possible, which means a rounded back is not possible). The legs then hang downwards/backwards and just flap around, which is physiologically wrong.
2. The back is not supported properly because it is being pressed against the stomach/chest of the carrier (male or female) and is then forced into a hollow back shape.
3. In the case of very small infants, the head cannot be supported correctly and it wobbles around.
4. It is true to say that the baby can "look" forwards, but when he is very young he can anyway only focus on his immediate environment. The many impressions caused by this can cause overstimulation. In addition to this, if an insecure baby tries to obtain eye contact with his carrier and cannot find him, he starts to cry due to overstimulation.
5. The baby is sitting on the lowest point of the upper body because his weight cannot be held equally by taut cloth. Boys are then subject to pressure against the testicles, and girls against the pubic bone.

If you still think that your baby should be carried facing forwards, then tie the sling in your favourite position and have a look in the mirror to see how your baby is hanging within the cloth!

THE WRAP CROSS-CARRY for premature babies (with skin contact)



01. Hold the centre of the cloth (see marking) by the edges and allow it to spread itself in front of your upper body.



02. Lead the cloth edge seams around your chest to the back so that they remain taut.



03. In doing so, only let the edges slip through your hands.



04. Now hold both cloth edges in one hand,



05. push the other hand behind your back under the top layer of cloth to take hold of the opposite cloth edge.



06. Now cross both cloth lengths over your back.



07. Don't let go of the edges ("bat arms").



08. Pull both cloth lengths to the front over your shoulders.



09. Gather the cloth together over your shoulders and in front of your stomach.



10. Pull the cross length together in front of your navel.



11. Take hold of both cloth sections



12. in one hand and



13. guide the cloth lengths underneath the cross length.



14. Cross the cloth lengths over in front of your stomach



15. and pull them around your hips



16. to the back.



17. Here, the cloth lengths are crossed again and



18. brought round to the front.



19. Tie the cloth lengths in front of your stomach



20. using a double knot.



21. Place your baby over one shoulder



22. and put one hand through the loop.



23. Then take hold of your baby's foot and guide it downwards.



24. Now place your baby slowly



25. on the other shoulder and repeat the procedure for the other side.



26. Your baby is now sitting on the crossover and the cloth lengths are lying across his shoulders.



27. Your baby should be as close to you as this.



28. Now pull the inside length of cloth to widen it out across your baby's bottom until the edges are behind the hollow of both knees.



29. Then pull the cloth across the baby's back (the centre of the cloth should be behind the centre of the back) and over his head and



30. do the same on the other side (upper cloth layer). A mirror is very helpful here!



31. Pull the cloth nice and tight and evenly across your baby's back and head to avoid any folds which might be uncomfortable.



32. Angle your baby's legs so that he is sitting in the sling in the spread-squat position. Now take the cross length



33. and pull it slowly up over the legs, the bottom



34. and the whole back



35. as far as the neck. You can wrap the cross length around the feet so that they stay warm.



36. This is how it should look from behind so that both of you enjoy carrying comfort and nothing is pressing.



37. The elastic baby sling holds your baby securely to your body even in the kangaroo position. Your baby will be optimally warmed thanks to direct skin contact.



38. You can now enjoy the kangaroo position completely relaxed.



39. When you want to take your baby out of the sling, push the cross length downwards



40. over the legs and feet.



41. First, pull the outside cross length and up to the hollow of your baby's knee



42. and now the inside cloth length.



43. Put your arms underneath your baby's armpits around his back and support his head.



44. Now you can lift your baby out upwards.



45. You can leave the sling in the wrapped position until you need it again.

THE WRAP CROSS-CARRY (for newborn babies)



01. Tie the wrap crosscarry for premature babies up to this point (up to Page 11, Fig. 31).



02. Put your arms over the shoulder towards which the baby's head is facing



03. and pull the cloth down over your shoulder so that baby can see better.



04. Now pull the cross length first over one leg



05. and then over the other leg.



06. Pull the cross length up over the baby's bottom



07. and back



08. as far as the neck. Angle your baby's legs so that he is sitting in the sling in the spread-squat position.



09. This is how it should look from the side



10. and from the back.

Advantage of this variation:
The baby's weight is distributed evenly across your back and shoulders.

The advantage of carrying in a **Hoppediz**® Baby Sling for the baby

- Babies are not just babies, they can be carried, and carrying helps to satisfy one of their **primal requirements for closeness and security**.
- In the case of "**premature babies**", the **loss of time** in the mother's womb **can be compensated for outside the mother, but extremely near to her**. Carrying **binds both mother and child** even more, especially if they had less contact earlier on.
- When close to your body, **your baby feels secure and protected**. He feels your movements, and he can hear and smell you. This has positive consequences for the entire physical, motor and mental development.
- The sling is also a suitable means for **the parents of adopted children** to give their child security, safety and a sense of basic trust.
- **Flatulence**, and the **pain caused by threemonth colic**, can be considerably reduced by the light massage caused by the movement in the sling and the warmth of the person carrying him.
- Babies are gently **comforted** by the light swaying movement, just as they are during the time in the mother's womb (even in the case of children who cry a lot and have colicky pains), and often go to sleep during carrying.
- The **sense of balance is trained** particularly well by the wide variety of movements which the baby makes with you from birth onwards. The **metabolism is also stimulated**.
- The **spread position of the legs has a positive effect on the development of the hip**, and can also help to diminish incorrect positioning and to correct such problems. You should seek additional advice from your orthopaedic specialist or physiotherapist in the case of incorrect positioning.
- Infants are naturally provided with a **rounded spinal column**. For this reason, it is also beneficial for their development if they do not have to lie "straight as a board" in bed or in a pram. Thanks to the special weave used in your HOPPEDIZ® Baby Sling, the cloth adapts individually to your baby's body and supports him. This is not possible with other carrying aids or bags.
- Your baby can **observe the world "from above"**, and right from the beginning he has the feeling that **"I belong out there"**.



The advantage of carrying in a **Hoppediz** Baby Sling for the parents

- You can always have your **child with you wherever you are** (shopping, on the beach, in the woods, jumble sales, bus, train...). This is not possible with a pram.
- In addition, **your requirements for closeness** to your child will be met simply and naturally, even (and especially) for premature babies.
- If you have an older child (or even several) which also needs his „**share of kindness and affection**“ then you always have your **hands free** while the baby is in the sling.
- **Lighter housework** (dusting, vacuuming, cooking...) can also be carried out **with your child in the sling**, and you do not have to wait until your child is sleeping. This means **you have a little more time for yourself** and can use the baby's rest times for other purposes.
- **You get to know your own child much better** due to the close contact and quickly recognise and react to his requirements better. This means creating a **very good foundation for a sense of basic trust**.
- When you carry for longer periods, you have your child near to you and do not **overstretch your arms** (you should start with shorter carrying times so that your back, shoulder and pelvic musculature can gradually get used to these new movements).
- A sling **does not take up much space** and is **quickly to hand**. When, for example, your child is learning to walk and gets tired after a while, you can simply put him in the sling. This means that you can react better to your child and do not need to spend all your time battling with a pram.
- **Fathers** especially have the chance to build up an **enjoyable and intensive relationship** with their child/children when they are carrying them in the sling, and to **experience and consciously enjoy the resulting bodily contact**.



To round everything off

This brochure is intended to be a simple and practical introduction to carrying using a sling for you, your premature or newborn baby.

The tying methods which you have seen in this brochure have been described in as much detail as possible.

Just try them all out at once and then to choose the variation which both you and your baby like best.


All the carrying methods have one thing in common: they give the premature or newborn baby who is being carried, and you yourself, a feeling of nearness, safety and security. Carrying babies in a sling gives you the possibility to use the time of nearness optimally which premature and also newborn babies need so much.

If anything should be a little difficult to understand, or if you have suggestions for improvement, little

tricks, or need further information, we would be very pleased to receive information from you by e-mail (info@hoppediz.de) or by phone (+49 (0)22 02-98 35 0). We will then be able to pass this information on to anyone else interested when we next print our carrying instructions or adapt our web site.

With this in mind, we wish all those carrying and being carried a wonderful time and a lot of fun with and in the HOPPEDIZ® Baby Sling.

Annette & Ingo Schröder

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Baby Slings and more...

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