Attachment Behaviors in Mothers of Premature Infants:  
A Descriptive Study in Thai Mothers

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Prematurity and the associated maternal-infant separation after birth can affect the attachment process. The role of nurses in facilitating the process of attachment should be based on an understanding of the attachment behaviors demonstrated by mothers during their first visit with their premature infant in the neonatal care unit. The sample consisted of thirty mothers of premature infants who were hospitalized at one of the university hospital in Bangkok, Thailand. Data collection procedure were comprised of observation and interviewing mothers. Data were analyzed by using content analysis and descriptive statistics.

The results revealed that all mothers demonstrated most attachment behaviors (i.e., inspection, facial expression, touching, verbal expression, and eye-to-eye contact) except holding during their first visit. However, some mothers spent little time with their infant. The findings suggest that nurses should encourage mothers to interact with their infants in order to enhance maternal-infant attachment.