

Frequently Asked Questions

About SAFE SLEEP

Q: What is the safest way for my baby to sleep?

The safest way for your baby to sleep is alone, on his back, and in a crib with only a fitted sheet for every sleep time. Since the Back to Sleep campaign started in the 1990's, there has been a significant decrease in the number of sleep-related infant deaths just from placing babies to sleep on their back. Remember to remove all toys, soft bedding, blankets and any other soft objects from the crib.

Q: Is it okay if my baby sleeps on his side?

No. Babies placed to sleep on their sides can easily roll onto their stomach, which increases the risk of death. For this reason, babies should sleep fully on their backs for naps and at night.

Q: It gets cold at night, is it ok to put a blanket on my baby?

No. Soft bedding and loose blankets have been responsible for the suffocation of many babies. Dressing your baby in warm pajamas or using a sleep sack can keep your baby warm and safe.

Q: If my baby is sleeping on his back, is he more likely to choke?

No. Babies are less likely to choke on their backs. Talk to your doctor if you have concerns about your baby spitting up while sleeping.

Q: Isn't it better for my baby to be snuggled in bed with me?

No. Babies who share a bed with adults are much more likely to die of sleep-related deaths than those who sleep in their own bed. Babies can become trapped between the mattress and the wall; suffocate on the blankets and pillows; or get rolled on by adults, siblings or pets in the bed. Your baby should be in his own bed for every sleep.

Q: Are there times when my baby should be on his stomach?

Yes. Your baby should have plenty of tummy time when they are awake and supervised. Tummy time helps strengthen your baby's neck and shoulder muscles and build motor skills.

Q: Will my baby get flat spots on the back of the head from sleeping on his back?

Most babies do not develop a flat spot from sleeping on their back. Though it is possible for some babies to develop a flat spot on the head, it usually rounds out as they grow older and sit up more. The best way to prevent flat spots is to limit the amount of awake time baby spends on their back, limit time in swings or bouncers to give your baby lots of tummy time while awake, and to alternate which end of the crib you place your baby's feet.

Q: Is it ok to use crib bumper pads?

No. Crib bumper pads can cause serious injuries like suffocation and death. Keeping them out of your baby's sleeping area is the best way to avoid these dangers.

Q: Can smoking increase the risk of sleep-related deaths?

Yes. Smoking during pregnancy and second hand smoke increases the risk of infant death and other health issues. Even if you smoke away from your baby, residue on your hands and clothes is still harmful and has been shown to increase the risk of sleep-related infant deaths.

Q: Can my baby sleep in a swing, bouncer or similar products?

No. Many infant deaths have occurred in these products. The position that these products create for your baby lowers oxygen levels and increases the risk of infant death.

Q: If my baby rolls onto his stomach during sleep, do I need to put my baby on his back again?

No. Rolling over is an important and natural part of your baby's growth. If your baby rolls over on his own during sleep, you do not need to turn the baby back over onto his back. However, it is very important to keep the sleep area clear of any loose bedding or items so your baby does not roll onto them.

Sources:

American Academy of Pediatrics (2018) SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Expansion of Recommendations for Safe infant Sleeping. Retrieved from aap.org

Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2018) Safe to Sleep. Retrieved from: safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov

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You can keep
your baby safe by
remembering the
ABCs



Alone



on the **B**ack



In a **C**rib

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