



# Safe Sleep Environment for your Baby

## Lay Baby on their Back to Sleep

The safest place for your baby to sleep or nap is in a crib on their back as this decreases the risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Parents and caregivers should share this information with everyone who cares for their baby.

## Sleeping Area

The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a crib/cradle/bassinet that meets Health Canada's current standards. Make sure the mattress is firm and that it fits snugly in the frame of the crib/cradle/bassinet. Other than a firm mattress and a fitted sheet, there is no need for extra items like toys, stuffed animals, bumper pads, blankets, pillows or wedges as they can increase the risk of injury and suffocation. Instead of a blanket, use light sleeping clothing for your baby such as a one piece sleeper to avoid overheating. Never put your baby to sleep on an adult bed, couch, chair or leave your baby to sleep in a high chair, car seat or baby swing, as these can all increase the risk of overheating and suffocation.

## Room-Sharing

This is when your baby sleeps in the same room as you, but remains in their own crib, cradle or bassinet that is placed beside your bed. Room sharing makes night time feedings easier and can lower the risk of SIDS.

## Bed Sharing

This is when your baby sleeps on the same surface, bed or sofa as you. This has higher risk of SIDS and suffocation because baby can become trapped, roll off the bed and overheat. Bed sharing is not recommended. If you choose to bed share:

- Do not smoke, use alcohol or drugs, including cannabis
- Do not bed share with infants under 4 months old, or infants born preterm or low birthweight
- Do not sleep on a soft surface, like a sofa, chair or waterbed
- Do not use soft bedding, pillows or comforters that can overheat or suffocate baby



- Do remember to put baby on their back to sleep, on a firm, flat surface with no gaps and no loose blankets and ensure you can wake from sleep easily

## Swaddling

This is sometimes used to calm babies, but swaddling comes with risks. If you swaddle your baby:

- Do use a lightweight blanket and keep it away from baby's face and head to avoid suffocation
- Do dress baby in a light sleeper/onesie to avoid overheating
- Do leave baby's hands free so they can show hunger cues like sucking their hands or fingers
- Do not wrap too tightly as baby should still be able to move legs and hips
- Do not swaddle once baby can roll!

## For More Information:

- [www.publichealth.gc.ca/safesleep](http://www.publichealth.gc.ca/safesleep) Public Health Agency of Canada: Safe Sleep
- [www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca) Health Canada: Is Your Child Safe? Sleep Time
- [www.beststart.org](http://www.beststart.org) Sleep Well, Sleep Safe booklet
- [www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca) Canadian Pediatric Society: Safe Sleep for Babies
- Contact a Public Health Nurse at the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit

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