



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. Babies that sleep on their tummies have 5 times the risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Mothers should share this information with everyone who cares for her baby.

Sleeping Area

During the first 6 months 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. Make sure your baby is not too warm. Instead of a blanket, use light sleeping clothing for your baby such as a one piece sleeper or sleep sack. NEVER put a baby on an adult bed, couch, sofa, chair or other soft surface to sleep.

Room-Sharing

This is where the baby's crib/cradle/bassinet is in the same room and near the parent's bed. Babies will benefit from co-sleeping as it lowers the risk of SIDS but also makes night time feeding easier.

Bed Sharing

This is where a baby sleeps on the same surface as an adult. If you are choosing to bed share, make sure you keep your baby safe by following the guidelines from the Canadian Paediatric Society (link below). If you choose to bed share, parents should:

- Breastfeeding
- Be able to rouse from sleep easily
- Not use drugs or alcohol
- Not be overly exhausted
- Not be ill
- Smokers should never co-sleep with babies as they breathe out chemicals from cigarettes, which can increase babies risk of SIDS.



Health Canada does not recommend bed sharing as it increases the risk of suffocation, overheating and overlying (rolling onto the child).

Swaddling

Make sure to follow your infant's cues and don't wrap if your infant resists. Use a lightweight blanket only and dress your infant in a light sleeper or onesie to avoid overheating. Do not cover baby's head. When you swaddle your infant, make sure he can still bend his legs and keep his hands free from the swaddle. This way, he can indicate when he's hungry by sucking on his hands or fingers. Stop swaddling by 2 months before your infant starts to try to roll. Talk to a health care provider if you have any questions about swaddling your baby.

Helpful Websites:

- www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps
- www.canada.ca
- Canadian Paediatric Society - www.cps.ca
- www.beststart.org

If you have any questions, or would like more information about your babies sleep, contact a Public Health Nurse at the numbers below.

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