

Safe sleep for your baby's first year

Babies spend a lot of time sleeping and need a safe sleep environment. Research tells us that creating a safe sleep environment will help reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and prevent other sleep-related injuries and death in babies. To learn more about safe sleep for your baby's first year, scan the QR code using your smartphone or visit HealthyParentsHealthyChildren.ca



Put your baby on their back to sleep, every sleep



Always put your baby on their back to sleep for their first year. This lowers their risk of SIDS. Even when your baby can roll over on their own, research tells us to still put them on their back to sleep. If they roll over, you don't have to move them back.

Back to sleep, tummy to play

When your baby is awake and with you, place them on their tummy to play several times every day. **Tummy time** helps prevent flat areas on their head. It also helps with your baby's development and makes their body stronger to be able to roll, sit and crawl.

Use a crib, cradle or bassinet that is free of clutter



A clutter-free crib, cradle or bassinet reduces your baby's risk of SIDS and helps prevent them from being trapped, strangled or suffocated. A safe crib, cradle or bassinet has:

- a firm, flat mattress that's in good condition and fits snugly into the frame
- a tight-fitting bottom sheet for the mattress
- no stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads or other items such as heavy blankets, quilts, sheepskins or positioning devices, such as wedges or rolls

Putting a blanket over top of the crib, cradle or bassinet to block out light is not advised, as it can cause the baby to overheat. If the blanket falls on your baby, it can also decrease airflow and could smother them. Make sure the crib, cradle or bassinet follows government safety standards.

Playpens are for play

Playpens shouldn't be used for unsupervised sleep – they don't meet the same safety requirements as cribs, cradles and bassinets.

Car seats are for travel

Car seats keep babies safe during travel and shouldn't be used for sleeping. It's not safe for babies to sleep in a seated position. Plan ahead. When you get to where you're going, take your baby out of the car seat and put them on their back to sleep on a safe sleep surface.

Keep your baby warm, not hot



If your baby gets too hot (overheats), it increases their risk of SIDS. Your baby is too hot if they're sweating or they feel too warm to the touch. Your baby is safest when the room temperature is comfortable for an adult wearing light clothing. If your home is cool, choose a warmer sleeper for your baby. Try not to over-bundle or over-dress your baby. Your baby does not need a blanket. If you choose to use a blanket, make sure it's

- light-weight
- firmly tucked under 3 sides of their mattress
- only reaches up to your baby's chest

Keep spaces smoke-free before and after birth



Help keep your baby healthy by being smoke-free. Babies whose mothers smoked while pregnant are at a much greater risk of SIDS. Babies who are exposed to second-hand smoke, both before and after birth, are also at a greater risk of SIDS. Make sure no one smokes around your baby—at home, during travel or while being cared for by others.

For help to cut back or quit smoking, visit albertaquits.ca or call toll-free **1-866-710-QUIT (7848)**.

Breastfeed your baby



Breastfeeding may offer some protection against SIDS. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life is recommended.

Taking your baby into bed for feeding or for comfort is risky if you fall asleep. Lying down to feed is an effective feeding position for many moms. However, it's easier to fall asleep if you're in this position, especially if you're tired.

To stay awake while feeding your baby in your bed, try wiping your face and neck with a wet cloth or keeping the room lights, TV or music on. Put your baby on their back in their own crib, cradle or bassinet if you feel sleepy.

Swaddling

Swaddling is often used to calm and soothe an infant. Babies do not need to be swaddled for sleep. To watch a video on swaddling, scan the QR code with your smartphone.



Share a room with your baby



Room-sharing means that your baby sleeps in the same room as you or another person, but on a separate sleep surface like a crib, cradle or bassinet. It's recommended that you share a room with your baby for at least the first 6 months. Room sharing reduces the risk of SIDS when your baby sleeps on separate surface.

Room-sharing:

- keeps your baby close and safe
- supports the bond between you and your baby
- makes it easier to learn and respond to your baby's cues
- makes it easier to feed your baby, especially at night. If you bring your baby into bed for feeding, put them back in their own crib, cradle or bassinet before you go to sleep.

Don't share a bed, sofa or any other sleep surface with your baby

Bed or sleep surface-sharing means that a baby sleeps on the same surface like a bed or sofa with another person. This includes a parent, caregiver, child or even a pet. Twins and other multiples are also safer when sleeping on their own and not sharing a sleep surface. Bed or surface sharing can increase the risk of SIDS and falls, strangulation or suffocation if:

- trapped between a mattress and headboard or footboard
- wedged against a wall or person
- tangled in bedding, pillows or cushions

If you choose to bed or sleep surface share:

- never sleep with your baby on any soft or padded surface such as a sofa, upholstered chair, bed with a soft mattress or bedding, water or air-filled mattress
- keep bed covers, blankets and pillows far away from your baby
- make sure that you and your partner know when your baby is in bed with you

Never sleep with your baby if you or your partner:

- smoke
- are overtired from stress or lack of sleep
- have taken alcohol, marijuana, street drugs or any
- prescription, over-the-counter or herbal medicine - these can make you less able to respond to your baby's needs