

Safe Sleep Structures

Call the doctor:

- If your baby stops breathing, appears pale or blue, or goes limp, gently rock or stimulate the baby to encourage breathing.
- If your baby is not responding, call 911 immediately.

Call

How to Create a Safe Sleep Environment for a Baby:

- Place all infants on their backs when sleeping. Remember the phrase “back to sleep.”
- Avoid bed sharing. A baby should not sleep in a bed with other children, pets, or adults. They could accidentally roll over and smother the baby.
- Babies should sleep alone in a crib or bassinet. The baby’s sleep area should have a firm mattress that fits the crib or bassinet, and a fitted sheet over the mattress.
- Make sure the baby’s head and face are not covered.
- The slats on the crib should be no more than 2-3/8 inches apart. All newer crib models meet recommended safety standards. Specific safety standards can be reviewed at www.cpsc.gov.
- Cribs that need repairs due to missing or broken pieces should not be used.
- Bumper pads are not needed, but if used they should be thin, firm, and well-secured to the crib.
- Do not put any soft items into the crib or bassinet. This means no additional blankets, no pillow, no stuffed animals, and no clothing or other items.
- Never have any infant sleep on a soft mattress or a water bed.
- Keep the baby’s sleep area away from windows, blinds, hanging objects, cords, and electrical outlets to avoid injuries.
- Keep the room temperature comfortable (68-72 °F) so that the baby does not get too warm.
- During the first year of life, it is good for a baby to use a pacifier when sleeping. This has been shown to lower a baby’s risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Do not smoke near an infant.
- Never let a baby fall asleep in a bed or chair with someone who is smoking, is tired or ill, has consumed alcohol or taken medications, or is extremely overweight.
- To prevent suffocation outside of the sleep environment, keep plastic wrap and plastic bags out of your child’s reach.

Tummy Time

During the day when babies are awake, they should be placed on their stomachs for supervised play. This “tummy time” helps babies have normal muscle development of the back and neck. But when it is bedtime or naptime, remember to place infants on their backs.

Take Note:

Consider taking an Infant and Child Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) class. These classes are recommended for anyone who cares for infants and children.

The Facts:

Bed sharing is a common practice in many cultures for many reasons. However, adult beds were not designed for babies to sleep in, and while an adult bed is comfortable for an adult, it is dangerous for an infant.

Studies have shown that sharing a bed with an infant increases the baby’s risk of injuries and even death due to suffocation. Room sharing is a safer alternative to bed sharing. Keeping a baby’s crib or bassinet next to your bed allows you to monitor the baby without increasing the risk of injuries or death due to suffocation.

Here are some guidelines for creating a safe sleep environment for all babies. By following these simple steps, you can prevent accidental infant deaths.