



Safe Sleep for Your Baby

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the leading cause of death for infants in the United States up to 1 year of age. In 2016, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Task Force on SIDS updated their national guidelines to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related deaths. The SIDS task force at University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital supports AAP guidelines as best practice for creating the safest sleep environment for infants. **Take the following steps** to reduce your baby's risk for SIDS and other causes for sleep-related infant death, such as accidental suffocation:

- Always lay your baby on their back for sleep, at naps and at night.
- Baby should sleep in a safety-approved crib, bassinet, or pack-n-play covered with a fitted sheet.
- Keep soft objects, toys, crib bumper pads and any loose bedding out of the sleep area.
- Dress your baby in a sleeper or sleep sack for comfort and warmth during sleep.
- Keep baby's crib in your bedroom, close to your bed for at least the first 6 months and up to one year.
- Do not smoke during pregnancy. Don't smoke or allow anyone else to smoke around your baby.
- Feed your baby breast milk for at least the first 2 months and longer, if you so desire.
- Give your baby a pacifier for naps and at bedtime.
- Do not let your baby get too hot during sleep.
- Your baby should receive routine vaccinations and regular health checkups.
- Tummy time is important, but only when baby is awake and you are watching closely.

Learn more about ways to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep related causes of infant death at <https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov>.

Not all Safe Sleep Products are Safe for Infants

Many products are marketed for “safer sleep” or to reduce the risk of SIDS. However, products without the AAP endorsement have not been shown to be safe for infants and are **not recommended**.

Products for which the AAP remains neutral:

- Special crib mattresses: Some manufacturers claim that certain mattresses aid in the dispersion of carbon dioxide in situations where an infant rolls onto their belly while sleeping. The AAP asserts there is no data to support this claim, however there is no harm in using CSPC-approved crib mattresses as long as safe sleep practices are maintained.
- Monitors: There is no evidence that cardiorespiratory monitors decrease the incidence of SIDS. The use of these monitors should not decrease the adherence to safe sleep practices.

Products and practices considered unsafe by the AAP:

- Wedges/positioners: The AAP strongly recommends placing infants on their backs to sleep on a firm surface. Side sleeping and positioning are not advised. Wedges and positioners are not recommended by the AAP.
- Bumper pads: Bumper pads and mesh bumpers have been implicated as factors contributing to infant deaths from suffocation, entrapment, and strangulation.
- Baby boxes: These are not regulated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and have not been tested to meet mandatory crib safety standards. Families at UI Stead Family Children’s Hospital who are unable to provide a safe crib for their infant after discharge may be eligible to receive a free play yard.
- In-bed co-sleeping: Evidence shows that room-sharing without bed-sharing decreases the risk of SIDS by as much as 50 percent. However, bed-sharing – or co-sleeping – is a leading risk factor for SIDS and sleep- related infant death in the U.S. This practice is not recommended.

Safe sleep products can be purchased from the UI Stead Family Children’s Hospital Safety Store. The trained Safety Store staff is also available to provide education on how to use safety products.

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