

Safe Sleep for Your Baby

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the leading cause of death for babies in the United States up to 1 year of age. Stead Family Children's Hospital supports the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) guidelines as best practice for making the safest sleep environment or space for your baby.

How can I lower the risk of SIDS for my baby?

Do these safe sleep practices to lower your baby's risk for SIDS and other causes for sleep-related deaths:

- **Always** lay your baby on their back for sleep (for naps and at night).
- Your baby should sleep in a safety-approved crib, bassinet, or pack-n-play. The mattress should be covered with a fitted sheet.
- Do **not** put any soft objects (like pillows, blankets, or bumper pads) in your baby's sleep space.
- Dress your baby in a sleeper or sleep sack for comfort and warmth during sleep.
- Weighted blankets, weighted sleepers, and weighted swaddles should **never** be put on or near your sleeping baby.
- Your baby should **never** be put on a couch, sofa, armchair, or cushioned area to sleep.
- Keep your baby's crib in your bedroom, close to your bed, for the first 6 months after birth.
- Do **not** smoke cigarettes or marijuana while you are pregnant or after birth. Do not let anyone smoke around your baby.
- Feed your baby breast milk for the first 2 months, and longer if you want.
- Give your baby a pacifier for naps and at bedtime.
- Do not let your baby get too hot during sleep.
- Your baby should get routine vaccinations and have regular health appointments.
- Tummy time is important. Only do tummy time when your baby is awake, **and** you are watching closely.

Where can I learn more?

- safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov
- keepingkidssafe@uiowa.edu
- uichildrens.org/safety-store
- SFCH Safety Store at 319 – 356 - 3543

Are all safe sleep products safe for my baby?

Many products are marketed for "safe sleep" or to lower the risk of SIDS. Products without the approval of the AAP:

- Have **not** been shown to be safe for babies.
- Should **not** be used.

What products do the AAP stay neutral?

Special crib mattresses

- Some manufacturers say that certain mattresses help babies breathe better when they roll onto their tummy while sleeping. The AAP says there is no data to support this.
- There is no harm in using CSPC-approved (Consumer Product Safety Commission) crib mattresses, as long as safe sleep practices are done.

What products and practices does the AAP say are unsafe?

Monitoring devices (monitor baby vital signs such as heartbeat and breathing)

- There is no evidence that these devices (like Nanit® and Owlet®) lower SIDS. These are non-medical devices that can be bought by the public. They should not be used to prevent sleep-related deaths.

Weighted sleep products

- The AAP does not recommend any weighted objects be put on or near sleeping babies. Examples are weighted blankets, weighted sleepers, and weighted sleep sacks.

Wedges or positioners

- The AAP strongly recommends putting babies on their backs to sleep **and** on a firm, flat space. Wedges and positioners have been linked to sleep deaths from suffocation (not getting enough oxygen), entrapment (cannot move), and strangulation (not getting enough blood flow).

Bumper pads

- Bumper pads and mesh bumpers have been linked to baby deaths from suffocation, entrapment, and strangulation. Padded crib bumpers are now banned in the United States under federal law.

Bed sharing and co-sleeping

- Bed sharing is not recommended. Babies that sleep with or share beds with parents are much more likely to have a sleep-related death.

Other products

- These products do not meet federal safety standards for safe sleep. They are not recommended: inclined sleep products, cardboard baby boxes, in-bed sleepers, baby nests and pods, and hammocks.

Where can I buy approved safe sleep products?

- Approved safe sleep products can be purchased from the Stead Family Children's Hospital Safety Store.
- The Safety Store staff are trained and able to teach you how to use safety products.