

Safe Sleep recommendations for infants less than 1 year old

Safe Sleep describes a set of recommendations to make your baby's surroundings safer and help reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends:

- Placing your baby on their back to sleep for every sleep.
- Sharing a room, but not a bed, with your baby until 6 months of age.
- Using a separate sleep surface for your baby such as a crib, pack-n-play or bassinette.
- Using a firm mattress with a sheet and nothing else in their sleeping area such as toys, pillows, loose blankets or bumpers.
- The mattress and your baby should lay flat.
- Sleeping in car seats, swings or other motion devices is not recommended because they are not flat and may compromise their breathing.
- Using a sleep sack or swaddle for the first few months is acceptable but once they begin to roll over, they should no longer be swaddled.
- Once breastfeeding is established, using a pacifier during naps and at night.
- Do not worry if your baby spits up, laying on their back is still the safest position for them to sleep.
- Avoid letting your baby get too hot and do not put a head covering on during sleep.

Sleep tips as your baby grows:

- "Tummy time" is placing your baby on their tummy when they are awake, and you are awake. This helps make their muscles strong and decreases flat spots on their head.
- Start with a few minutes of tummy time with your newborn and work your way up to a total of 1 hour by 3 months of age.
- Newborns sleep 18 to 20 hours a day, including naps, decreasing to about 12-16 hours a day, including naps, by 1 year of age.
- Try to encourage a regular pattern of naps and night sleep by maintaining a schedule that your baby will begin to expect. A bedtime routine is especially important to start around 6-8 weeks old.
- To encourage sleep during the night, keep the lights dim and decrease stimulation such as talking to your baby or undressing/changing them.

Additional helpful resources

Safe to Sleep: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/sids>