



What You Need to Know:

Safe Sleep for Babies



Why is safe sleep important?

The leading causes of death after newborns leave the hospital are sleep-related. **SUID (Sudden Unexpected Infant Death)** is the sudden death of a baby under 1 year old. Over 3,500 babies die from SUID each year in the U.S. Share these safe sleep guidelines with anyone taking care of your baby.

What is recommended for safe sleep? It is as simple as ABCD:

A Alone

- Babies should sleep alone in a crib, bassinet, or Pack 'n Play®.
- Share the room, not the sleep space for at least the first 6 months.
- Bed sharing is **never** recommended.
- In-bed sleepers should not be placed in an adult bed.
- Side-sleeping wedges should not be used.

B Back

- Put your baby to sleep on their back for every sleep.
- The risk of SUID greatly increases when a baby sleeps on their belly. Babies cannot move their necks as freely when they are on their bellies and this may block their ability to breathe.
- Once your baby can roll over, you do not need to move them to their back.

C Clean, Clear Crib

- Use a firm, flat, non-inclined sleep surface (such as a crib, cradle, Pack 'n Play®, or bassinet) with a tightly fitted sheet for every sleep.
- Keep your baby's sleep space completely empty (no diapers, wipes, bumper pads, pillows, or stuffed animals), as they can block your baby's airway.
- Dress your baby in a sleep sack or sleeper onesie. Do not use loose blankets until the age of 1 year. This helps to lower the risk of covering their head or getting trapped.
- Hats should only be worn outside for weather protection. Never let a baby sleep with a hat on.
- If your baby falls asleep in an inclined device with a strap (such as a car seat, infant seat, or swing) move them to a flat, firm surface as soon as possible to protect their airway and prevent suffocation.
- For nighttime feeds, remove blankets and pillows from your bed, turn lights on, and set a 10-minute timer. It is important to move your baby back to their crib or bassinet after feeding.

D Danger

- Being sleepy, exhausted, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs (including some prescription medicines) impairs your ability to take care of your baby. This makes bed sharing even more dangerous.
- You may let your baby sleep with a pacifier with nothing attached once breastfeeding is well established.

Scan the QR code to read the full American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations for Safe Sleep.



Tips to Help Keep Your Baby Safe

Do:

- Place your baby on their back to sleep.
- Use a firm, flat, non-inclined, safe sleep surface.
- Feed your baby human milk, if able.
- Share the room, not the sleep space.
- Place your baby in an empty crib.
- You may let your baby sleep with a pacifier with nothing attached once breastfeeding is well established.
- Keep up with doctor visits and vaccines.
- Research baby products and devices.
- Practice supervised tummy time.
- Share these safe sleep guidelines with anyone taking care of your baby.
- **Register** baby products and devices for product recall information.
- Remember, not all pictures on social media are pictures of safe sleep practices.

Do Not:

- **Do not** share a bed.
- **Do not** fall asleep with your baby on your chest or while holding them.
- **Do not** attach the pacifier to a string, cord, or toy.
- **Do not** place electrical cords, window blind cords, or baby monitor cords close to your baby's crib.
- **Do not** use inclined sleepers, crib bumpers, or loungers/breastfeeding pillows.
- **Never** place your baby on soft surfaces such as a pillow, quilts, or an adult bed. An adult bed is always too soft.
- **Do not** use a swaddle, blanket, or sleeper that is weighted.
- **Do not** put a hat on them while sleeping.
- **Avoid** overheating your baby.
- **Do not** smoke or vape around your baby or allow others to do so.

Other Things to Know

- Giving your baby human milk has been shown to reduce the risk of sleeping-related deaths.
- Avoid cribs that are broken, have missing parts, have been recalled, or were made before 2011 (with drop-side rails).
- Check for recalled items on the Consumer Product Safety Commission site at [cpsc.gov/recalls](https://www.cpsc.gov/recalls).
- Be aware of products claiming to prevent SUID. Home devices are not medical grade and should not replace following the safe sleep guidelines. Always talk to your doctor before buying them.
- Make sure the sleep space meets current safety standards at the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. **Scan the QR code** or go to [CPSC.gov](https://www.CPSC.gov).



Why is it important to know about SUID?

SUID can happen to any baby, but there are higher rates of death in babies who:

- Are premature
- Had a low birth weight
- Have had a recent high fever
- Are Black/African American or American Indian/Alaskan Native

If you do not have a crib, bassinet, or Pack 'n Play® for your baby and cannot afford one, please speak with your doctor or delivering hospital. If you have an emergency need for resources, please contact Cribs For Kids at cribsforkids.org/Find-a-crib.