

Newborn Sleep



SAFE SLEEP SUGGESTIONS

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has guidelines for safe sleeping practices. They recommend that babies under 6 months old (and preferably up to 1 year old) sleep in the same room, in their own bed, as their parents. This advice is part of an effort to reduce sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Research shows that sharing a room, but not a bed, with parents can reduce SIDS by up to 50%.

Other AAP suggestions for reducing the risk of SIDS:

- Put babies to sleep on their backs.
- Avoid cigarette, alcohol, and drug use during pregnancy and after baby is born.
- Do not put pillows, blankets, or sleep positioners in the crib. Same for bumpers and stuffed animals.
- Use infant zip-up sleepers instead of blankets.
- Breastfeed.
- Use a pacifier.
- Follow the vaccine schedule.



The AAP recommends that babies sleep in a crib, bassinet, or cosleeper near (but not in) the parents' bed. The AAP acknowledges that mothers often nurse their babies in bed and fall asleep accidentally. This means that many parents occasionally cosleep at some point. With that in mind, here are some suggestions for safe bed sharing:

- Use a mattress that is firm and flat.
- Place baby so they cannot fall out of the bed or slip between a mattress and wall or headboard.
- Don't use blankets and pillows near baby.
- Keep the room cool.

Avoid sleeping with baby in bed if *anyone* in the bed is overweight, snores, or is a heavy sleeper. Babies should never share a bed with adults who have consumed any alcohol, mind-altering substances, or narcotics. Babies should not be in bed with adults who use medications or substances that make them tired. Even over the counter medicines can be a problem. *Adults can suffocate babies without realizing it.*

HOW CAN I HELP MY BABY SETTLE DOWN IN THE EVENING?

At the end of the day everyone is ready to wind down. This is a great time for routines. The evening routine you create for your baby will provide a sense of comfort and security as they grow.

You can tell your baby is tired if they seem irritable. Sometimes their eyes are glazed or they're yawning. Another sign is if their skin is flushed or blotchy. Some babies rub their eyes or face with their fists when they're tired. Others won't make eye contact or smile.

WAYS TO HELP BABIES WIND DOWN:

- A slower pace to activities.
- Snuggles, hugs, and kisses.
- A shared story or book.
- Low lighting or a night light.
- Talking and singing softly.
- Turn off screens.
- Playing soothing music at a low volume.
- Rocking them.
- Give them a bath (see *Bath Time* article).

Routines are enjoyable and soothing for you and your baby. They help your child learn the order of activities and prepare for what will happen next. You can change routines as your child grows and develops, or as your needs change.

SCAN FOR MORE INFO

