

Keeping Your Child Safe

Safe Sleep at SickKids

Working together is the best way to keep your child safe.
Please read the important information below.

WHAT IS SAFE SLEEP?

Research shows that the safest way for a baby to sleep is in a crib on his back. This position reduces the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), smothering and suffocation.

SAFE SLEEP GUIDELINE

Keeping your child safe is a priority at SickKids. To protect your child's safety, SickKids has created A Safe Sleep guideline for infants.

As a parent/caregiver, you should know what to expect and how you can help:

- Babies under 2 years of age admitted to the hospital must sleep in a crib with a firm mattress and fitted sheet with no toys, loose bedding or supplies in the crib.
- Place your baby on his back for sleep unless there is a medical reason not to do so. If your doctors would like to place your baby in a different position to sleep, they will discuss this with you.
- Do not leave your baby to sleep (unsupervised) in a stroller, car seat, seating device or swing. If your baby falls asleep somewhere (e.g. bouncy chair, car seat) move him into the crib.
- Sleeping with your baby (bed sharing) in a bed or chair is dangerous. Put your baby in his crib to sleep.

KEEP YOUR BABY SAFE IN THE HOSPITAL CRIB

- Dress your baby in light layers. Bring two or more layers with you to hospital.
- Keep the crib clear. There should be no toys, diapers, bumper pads, pillows or any other objects in the crib.
- Remove strings and holders from pacifiers (soothers).
- Keep the crib sheets tightly fitted to the mattress.
- Never put anything around your baby's neck.
- Never put another child in your baby's crib.

SAFETY TIPS FOR USING HOSPITAL CRIBS

Keep crib rails fully up whenever not directly caring for your child.

- Press on crib rails to test that they lock in place.
- Only lower the rail on the side you work from when caring for your baby.
- Keep a firm hold on your baby while the crib rail is down to keep him from falling out of the crib.
- Never turn away or walk away from the crib when the crib rails are down, even if your baby is not yet able to roll.

PREVENTING SKULL FLATTENING

Some infants can develop skull flattening if positioned on their backs for long periods of time. To avoid this, place your baby on his tummy on a firm play surface for supervised play activities several times a day.

SAFE SLEEP AT HOME

Follow all of the recommendations in this pamphlet for safe sleep once you return home from the hospital. If you have any questions about safe sleep at home, ask your health-care team at SickKids or your family doctor.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Public Health Agency of Canada
www.publichealth.gc.ca/safesleep

The Canadian Foundation for the Study of Infant Death (CSFID)
www.sidscanada.org

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SPEAK UP AND ASK QUESTIONS. TALK TO YOUR HEALTH-CARE TEAM

- You know your child best. Speak up if you feel something's not right or you have concerns about your child's care.
- Give your health-care team an up-to-date description of your child's health.
- Tell us about any treatments or surgeries by any other health-care professionals, including naturopaths or herbalists.
- Tell us about your child's special physical, emotional or equipment needs or about any special aids like glasses or hearing aids.
- Share unique things about your child with caregivers that may be important for your child's overall care (e.g. if they dislike loud noises or bright lights).
- Tell us if there are any changes in your child's condition that concern you. You may notice things the health-care team doesn't.

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