

10 tips for making a Safe Sleep Environment for your baby



Every year, some infants die while sleeping. We at the Vermont Department of Health are sharing these guidelines for safe sleep with the hope that you and your loved ones will not have to experience such a loss. Occasionally specific health concerns do not allow for some babies to follow all recommendations. If your child has special health needs, please review these guidelines with your child's doctor.

Tip 1: Every caregiver places the infant on their back for **every** sleep until 1 year old.

Tip 2: Always place an infant to sleep on a firm surface in a safety approved crib with a firm mattress with fitted sheet.

Tip 3: Do not fall asleep in your bed or a couch or recliner with your baby. The baby can sleep in your bedroom in a separate crib, but should not sleep in your bed. Babies may be brought into bed for a feeding or comforting, but need to be returned to their cribs for sleep.

Tip 4: No loose bedding, stuffed animals or soft objects in the baby's crib. Do not use crib bumpers, even though these are for sale in many baby stores.

Tip 5: Mothers should not smoke either during pregnancy or after the baby is born. There should be no smoking in the home or car or in any other area where the baby will be exposed to tobacco smoke.

Tip 6: No alcohol or illicit drug use during pregnancy. After delivery, every caregiver must use caution with alcohol or other drugs that may impair a person's ability to provide safe baby care.

Tip 7: Once breastfeeding has been well established, try a pacifier at nap and bedtime to calm your baby.

Tip 8: Avoid overheating. Over-bundling and any loose clothing (bibs, hats, scarves) should be avoided. Place the baby in footed pajamas with a light cover tucked at the bottom and sides of crib, coming no higher than armpit level.

Tip 9: Never use devices sold that claim to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS.) (For example: wedges, positioners, or special sleep surfaces making a claim to reduce the risk of SIDS.)

Tip 10: Tell others who care for your baby about safe sleep. As your infant's primary caretaker, you have every right to demand that other family members and caretakers follow these rules.

For more information on safe sleep, ask your health care provider or contact the Vermont Department of Health at 1-800-649-4357, www.healthvermont.gov or visit the American Academy of Pediatrics website at www.aap.org