

Safe Sleep for Your Baby

Helping you to reduce the risk of SIDS

Even though we don't know the exact cause of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID), we know that some things can increase a baby's risk for SIDS/SUID and other sleep-related causes of infant death. The good news is that there are ways to reduce the risk.

Families and caregivers can keep babies safe while sleeping or napping by following these simple steps:



Alone. Always place babies to sleep alone. Share a room, but not a surface (e.g., beds, chairs, sofas) with your baby.



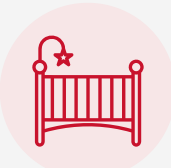
Avoid Smoking. Smoke makes it harder for babies, young children, or pregnant women to breathe well and increases the risk of sleep-related deaths in infants.



Back. Babies should always sleep on their backs. Babies are less likely to choke when on their backs.



Stay Cool. Babies with fever may overheat more easily because their body temperature may already be higher than normal. Sleeping on their back and uncovered, without blankets, can help prevent overheating.



Crib. Babies should always sleep in a crib, bassinet or pack'n'play – every night and every nap. The sleep area should be clean and clear of any blankets, pillows, objects, or loose bedding.



Always. Practice these precautions at all times.

With the increase of viral illnesses like RSV and flu, and that respiratory illness can be a risk factor^{[1][2]} for infant sleep-related death, it is even more critical for families to follow all precautions for safe sleep practices.

Sharing sleep surfaces with adults, other children, or animals increases the risk of sleep-related infant deaths. You may sleep in the same room, but not the same bed.^[3]

Talking with babysitters and caregivers about the baby sleeping alone in a crib, bassinet or pack-n-play, is critical to ensure a safe sleep environment for babies.^[4]

^[1] RSV in Infants and Young Children

^[2] Thach B. Tragic and sudden death. Potential and proven mechanisms causing sudden infant death syndrome. EMBO Rep. 2008 Feb;9(2):114-8. doi: 10.1038/sj.embor.7401163. PMID: 18246101; PMCID: PMC2246416.

^[3] Updated AAP Recommendations 2022

^[4] Safe sleep for your baby - NIH (pg.4 for Caregivers)

WHAT A SAFE SLEEP ENVIRONMENT LOOKS LIKE

The following images show a safe sleep environment for your baby.



Room Share:
Give babies their own sleep space in your room, separate from your bed.



Use a firm, flat, and level sleep surface, covered only by a fitted sheet*.



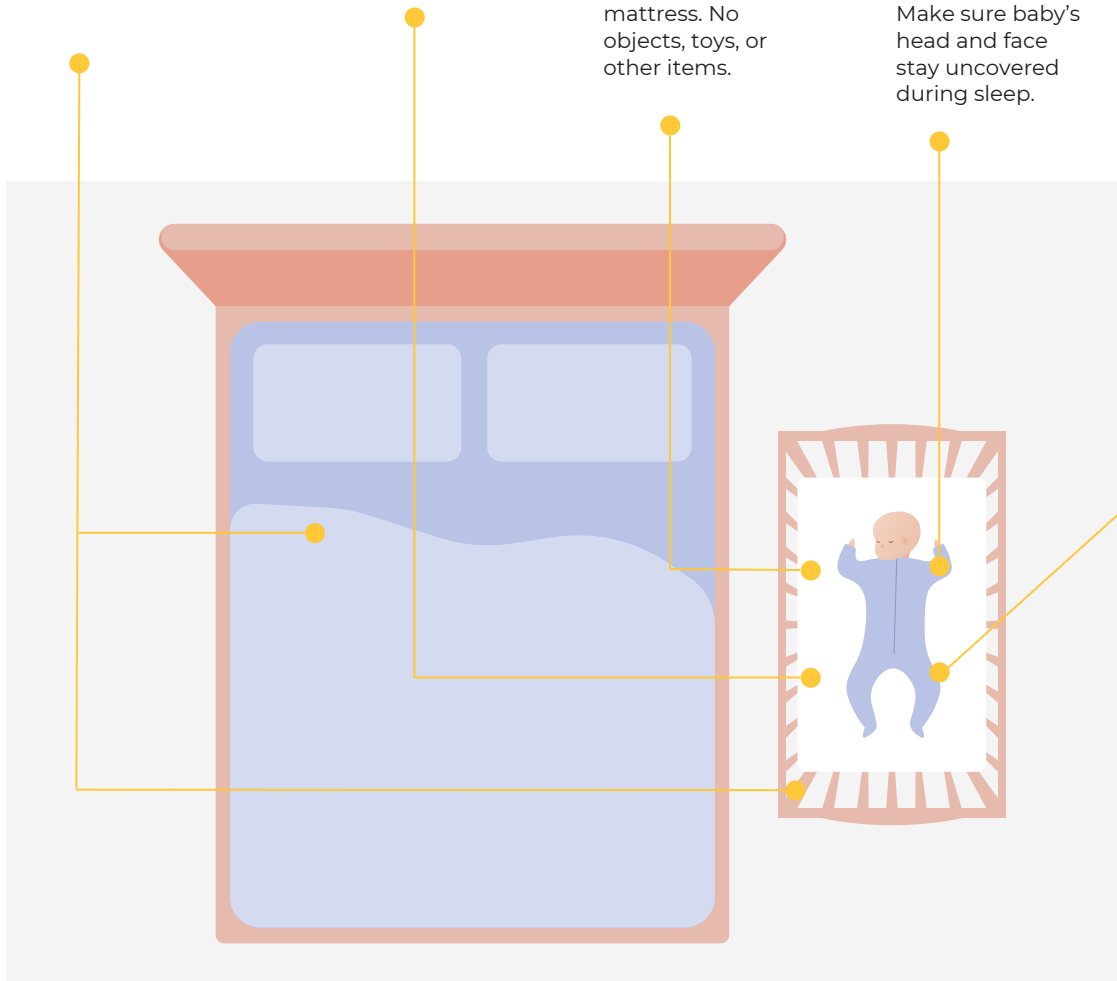
Remove everything from baby's sleep area, except a fitted sheet to cover the mattress. No objects, toys, or other items.



Use a wearable blanket to keep baby warm without blankets or pillows in the sleep area. Make sure baby's head and face stay uncovered during sleep.



Couches and armchairs are not safe for baby to sleep on alone, with people, or with pets.



Place babies on their backs to sleep, for naps and at night.



Keep baby's surroundings smoke/vape free.



Maternal and Child Health Bureau
201 Preston St.
Baltimore, MD 21201
mdh.mchb@Maryland.gov
health.maryland.gov/phpa/mch