

Breastfeed Your Baby to Reduce the Risk of SIDS



Many moms and moms-to-be know that breastfeeding offers many benefits for moms and babies. But they may not know that breastfeeding reduces baby's risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Babies who are breastfed or are fed expressed breastmilk are at lower risk for SIDS compared with babies who were never fed breastmilk. According to research, the longer you exclusively breastfeed your baby (meaning not supplementing with formula or solid food for the first 6 months), the lower his or her risk of SIDS.

Safe sleep environment and breastfeeding

Keeping baby safe when breastfeeding means thinking about how tired you are before and during baby's feeding. If there's a chance you might fall asleep, take a few minutes to make some changes to your environment to help reduce risks to baby:



Share your room with baby. Keep baby in your room close to your bed, but on a separate sleep surface designed for infants, ideally for baby's first year, but at least for the first six months.

Room sharing reduces the risk of SIDS and the chance of suffocation, strangulation, and entrapment. It also keeps baby close for comforting, bonding, and feeding.



If you bring baby into your bed for feeding, remove all soft items and bedding from the area.

When finished, put baby back in a separate sleep area made for infants, like a safety-approved crib* or bassinet, and close to your bed.

*A crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard that follows the safety standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is recommended. For information on crib safety, contact the CPSC at 1-800-638-2772 or <http://www.cpsc.gov>.



If you fall asleep while feeding baby in your bed, place him or her back in the separate sleep area as soon as you wake up.

Evidence shows that the longer a parent and infant share the same bed, the higher the risk for sleep-related causes of infant death, such as suffocation.



Couches and armchairs can be very dangerous for baby, especially if adults fall asleep while feeding, comforting, or bonding with baby on these surfaces.

Be mindful of how tired you are, and avoid couches and armchairs for breastfeeding if you think you might fall asleep. Ask someone to stay with you while you're breastfeeding to keep you awake or to place the baby into a safe sleep area if you fall asleep.

Everyone who cares for your baby should know the ways to reduce the risk of SIDS and sleep-related infant deaths.

Share Safe to Sleep® brochures, videos, and social media messages to keep caregivers informed and keep babies safe during sleep.



<http://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov>

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For more information about the Safe to Sleep® campaign, contact us:

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