



## Safer Sleep for Babies

Babies sleep a lot during their first year of life. It is important for parents, grandparents and other caregivers to follow these tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics to ensure safer sleep for all little ones. These safer sleep tips may reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

- Always place baby on his back to sleep, for naps and during the night.
- Baby should be in his own crib for sleeping. Baby may be placed in adult bed for breastfeeding, but should be moved back to the crib for sleeping. This is especially important if the adults have been using alcohol, medications or other drugs.
- The crib should have a firm mattress. The mattress should be covered with a tight-fitted sheet.
- Avoid using drop-side cribs.
- There should be no pillows, quilts, comforters, pillow like bumpers, stuffed toys or other soft objects in the crib. A thin blanket, placed to cover baby from mid-chest to feet can be used. Tuck in the blanket at the baby's feet and sides.
- Consider placing baby's crib in the caregiver's room. This way you can hear your baby more easily and help him if he's in distress. After the baby's first birthday, you can move the crib into the baby's room.
- Don't smoke during pregnancy. After the baby is born, do not allow persons to smoke in your home, your car or in the area where the baby is sleeping.
- Consider offering your baby a pacifier at naptime or bedtime. If you are breast feeding, you may delay starting pacifier use until baby is one month old. This will be enough time to ensure breastfeeding is well established.
- Keep temperature in sleeping room at a comfortable level (e.g., suitable for a lightly-clothed adult). Baby should be lightly clothed for sleep.
- Home monitors or other devices marketed to reduce SIDS have not been proven to be effective, so there is no need to purchase or use these items.
- Make sure other persons caring for your baby follow these tips. Ask them to read this sheet!

Give your baby plenty of time on his tummy when he is awake. Also, avoid keeping your baby in his car seat, carrier and "bouncer" for long periods of time. When your baby is sleeping, you can turn his head to the side. You should alternate sides each sleep period. These tips will help keep your baby from developing a flat spot on the back of his head.

For more information, contact Guilford County Department of Public Health at 641-7777 or visit our website at [www.guilfordhealth.org](http://www.guilfordhealth.org) or the American Academy of Pediatrics at [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

