

Babies Sleeping Safe



Co-Sleeping Safely with Your Baby

Some mothers have their infants sleep with them in bed following delivery and several months after. Some parents may co-sleep with their babies as a personal choice. Many families prefer co-sleeping to promote maternal bonding, breastfeeding, and a better response to baby's cries and needs. This fact sheet is designed to provide parents with safe guidelines for co-sleeping with their babies.

- **Place your infant on its back to sleep.** The back position is considered the best sleeping position for infants. Be sure not to use anything to prop or hold your baby in place.
- **Be careful when using certain prescription or over the counter medications.** If you are taking medication that makes you drowsy, sleep hard, or extremely tired, the best alternative is to place your baby in a crib next to your bed while using these types of medications to help avoid the chance of mistakenly laying on or smothering your baby.
- **Be careful with the type of bedding or sleeping materials you use.** Fluffy pillows, stuffed toys, plastics, and loose bedding can suffocate an infant and should not be used where babies sleep. Your baby should sleep on a firm flat surface which is covered by a tight fitting sheet. Avoid using thick comforters or blankets near your sleeping baby.
- **Avoid the use of alcohol or drugs.** If you or your partner have been drinking alcohol or using drugs, do not have your baby sleep with you. Alcohol and drugs can affect your ability to awaken or respond to your baby.

Other Tips for Safe Sleeping

- Do not let anyone smoke around your baby. Second-hand smoke affects the normal breathing of an infant and can cause respiratory and other medical problems. Do not bedshare if you are a smoker.
- Avoid putting your baby to sleep on surfaces such as sofas, recliners, waterbeds, futons, or beanbags. These are not safe places for babies to sleep and can increase the risk of being smothered or trapped.
- Avoid overheating your baby. Your baby should be lightly clothed for sleep, and the temperature of your home should be kept comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. Over bundling should be avoided, and your baby should not feel hot or moist to the touch.

This Safe Sleeping information acknowledges the importance of maternal and family bonding and supports actions that will promote infant health and survival. By following the above, you are helping to provide a safe and nurturing environment for your baby.

For more information on safe sleeping please
contact the Contra Costa SIDS Program at
(925) 313-6254

For more information on breastfeeding please
call the Contra Costa Breastfeeding Toll Free Line at
(866) 878-7767