

# Safe Sleep Ambassador

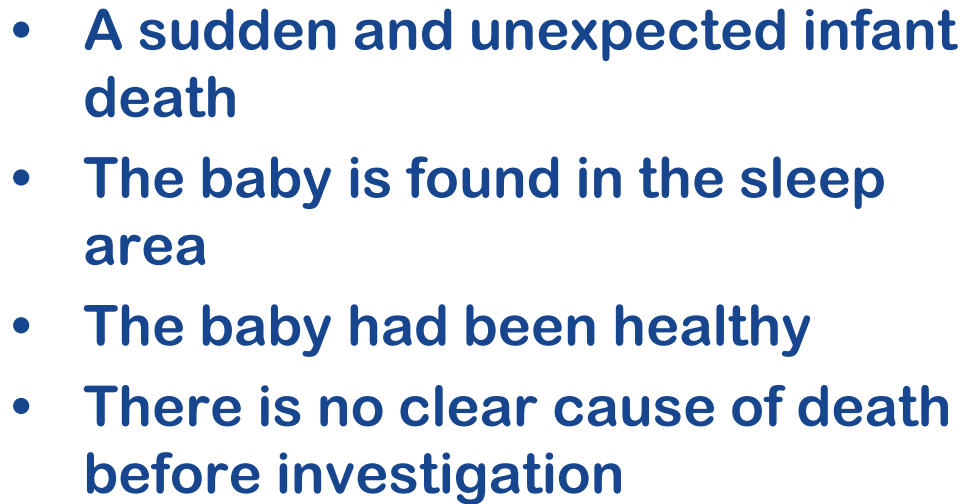


# What is a Safe Sleep Ambassador?

A Safe Sleep Ambassador is someone who makes a commitment to educate people about infant safe sleep and actively works to prevent suffocation and reduce the risk of sleep-related deaths.









**FACT:** Over 3,500 babies  
in the U.S. die each year from sleep-related deaths!

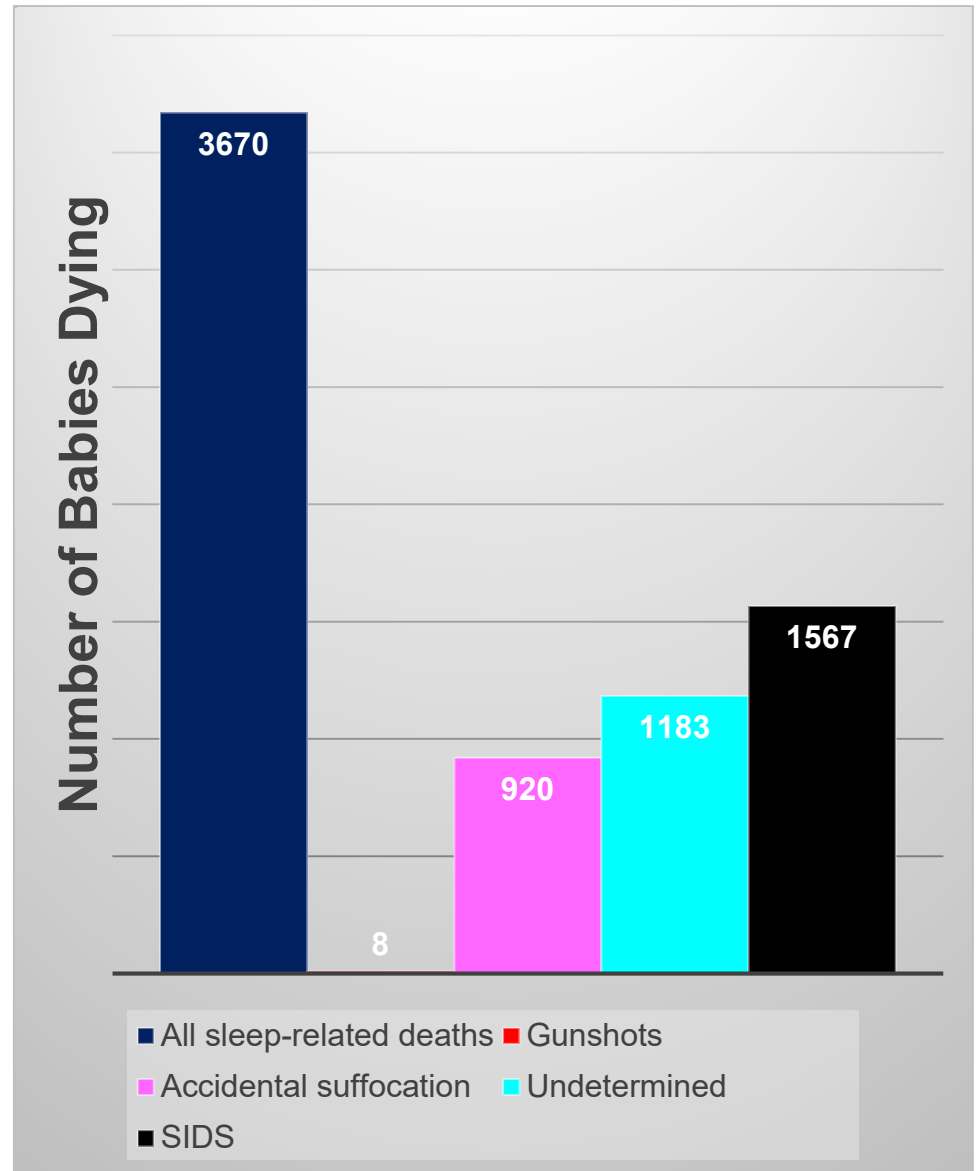


# Infant Sleep-Related Death Facts

- Infant sleep-related deaths are the leading cause of death in infants between 1 month and 1 year of age.
- The peak incidence is between 1 – 4 months.
- Approximately 1,500 sleep-related deaths are caused by Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- However, studies now show that the majority of sleep-related deaths are caused by accidental suffocation.
  - Accidents are preventable, so many of these deaths can be prevented.

**Q: How  
are our  
babies  
dying?**

**A: Sleep-Related  
Deaths**



# Answer

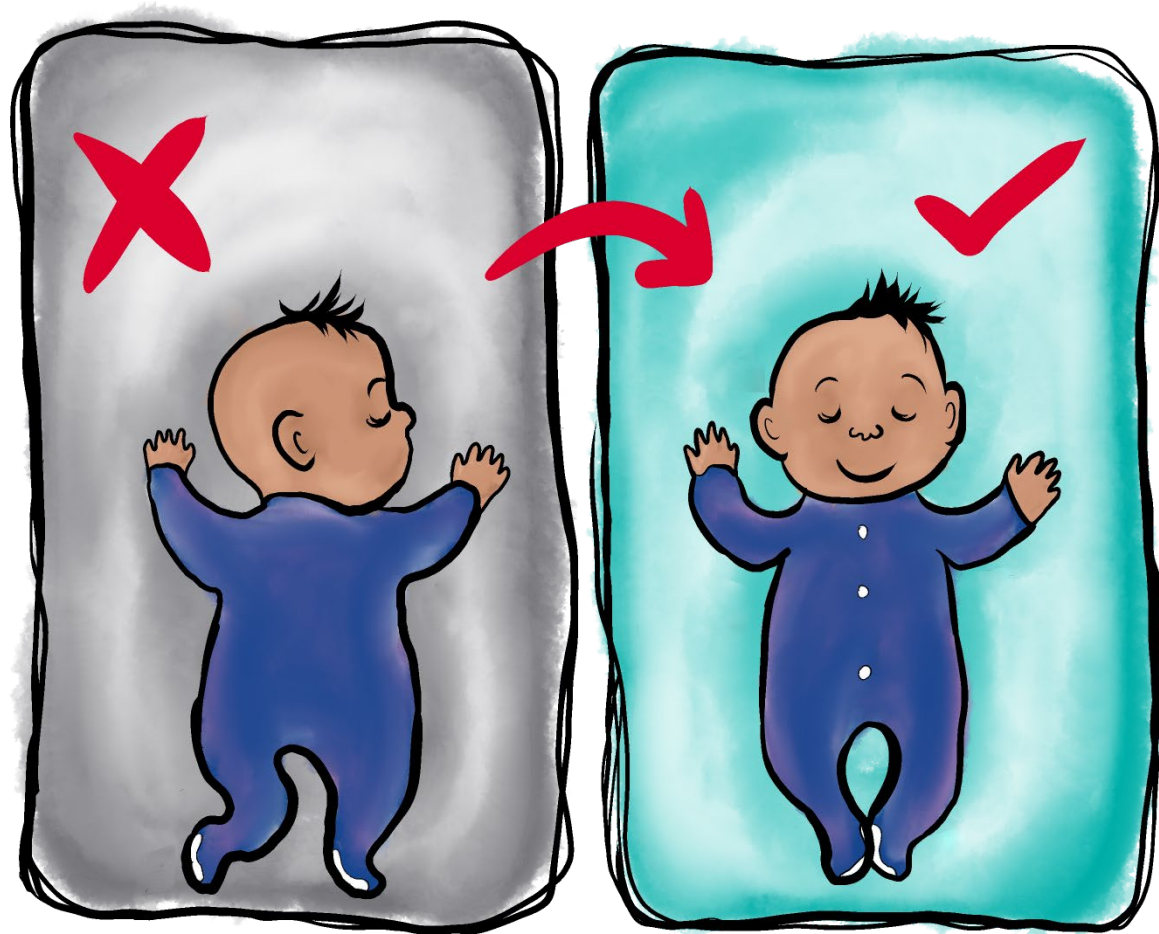
- Statistics show that more than 3,500 infants die unexpectedly in the U.S. every year.
- In the past decade, the number of accidental suffocation deaths has increased over 30 percent!
- The most common causes of the accidental deaths are laying over the baby, the use of soft bedding, and the baby getting wedged between two objects.



# What Do We Know?

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- Babies sleep safest on the back.
- Sleep surface matters.
- Every sleep time counts – for naps and for night!



# How to Protect a Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 1

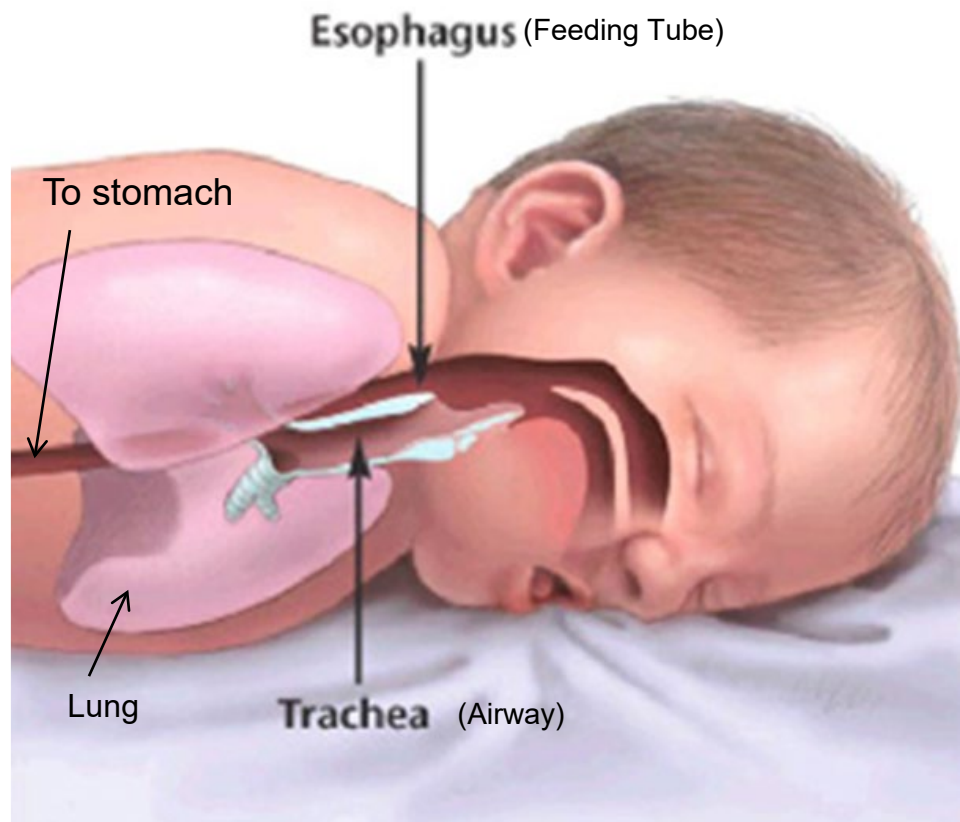
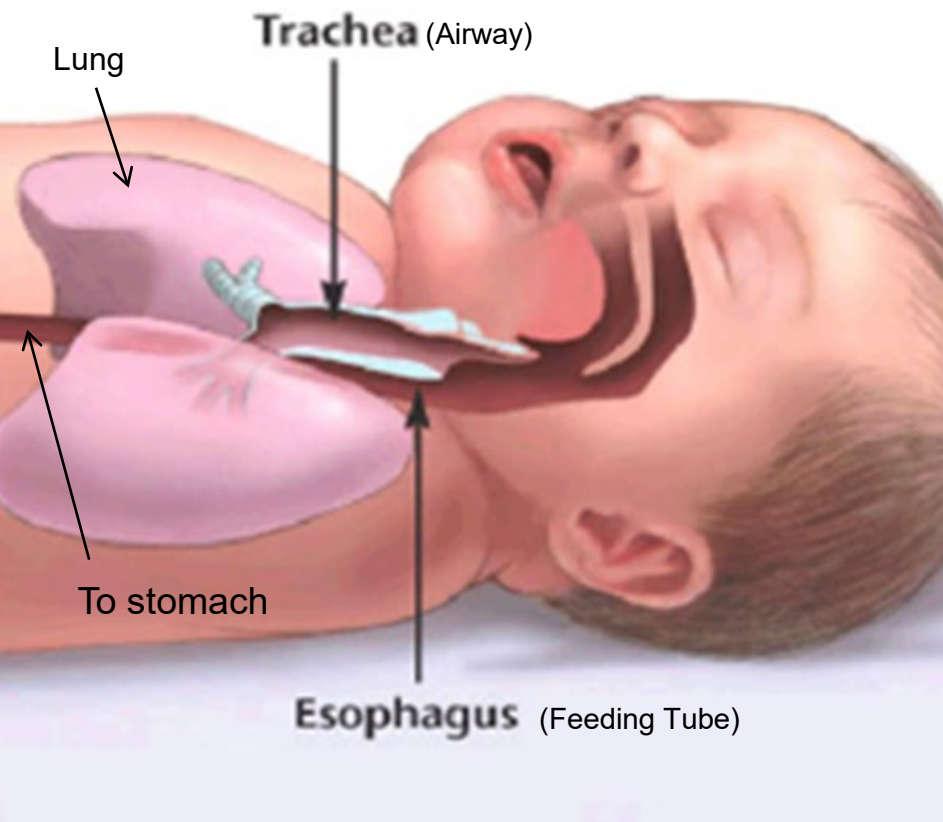
**ALWAYS** place your baby on the back to sleep



# Back is Best

- The back position is the safest.
  - Both the stomach and side positions double the risk of death.
- Stomach positioning can cause an upper airway obstruction.
- Stomach positioning also increases the risk of overheating.
- The side position is unstable and usually leads to stomach sleeping.
  - The position is unstable and usually leads to stomach sleeping.





# Q: Won't my baby choke sleeping on the back?

See next slide for explanation

# Sleep and Aspiration

- When the baby is placed on the back, the esophagus (which is the feeding tube) is below the trachea (which is the airway). If the baby spits up, the content will come out of the baby's mouth. The remaining content will go back down the esophagus by the force of gravity. The content is swallowed and will not get stuck in the lungs.
- On the other hand, when the baby is placed on the stomach, the trachea is below the esophagus. If the baby spits up, the content can go into the trachea and get stuck in the lungs. This is called aspiration.

Video explanation on next slide.

# Sleep and Aspiration

- There is no increase in aspiration or vomiting when babies are placed on their back to sleep.
- Remember: Coughing does not indicate choking. People cough to clear and protect their airway. It is a reflex, and healthy babies use it just like adults do!



# Rebreathing Theory

- Stomach sleeping may increase the risk of death due to rebreathing.
- Rebreathing is when the baby re-breathes his/her own expired breath leading to carbon dioxide build up and low oxygen levels.
  - Soft surfaces, blankets, pillows, bumper pads and other stuffed items also increase the risk of rebreathing.

# When can a baby sleep on their stomach?

- Once a baby can roll over well, the parent does not have to reposition the baby if he/she turns while sleeping.
- There are 2 important things to remember:
  1. Every time you put down the baby for sleep, place the baby **on his/her back to start**.
  2. When they roll over, they need to be doing so in a **safe environment free from any unsafe items**.



Before 1992, 8,000+ babies died each year.

After 2000, there are only approximately 3,500 deaths each year in the United States.

**YES!**

**80,000 babies' lives have been saved!**

**Q:** Does putting a baby on the back to sleep *really* work?



# Back Sleeping Saves Lives!

- Before 1992 when the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended infants be placed on their back to sleep, there were **8,000** infant sleep deaths every year.
- After the Back to Sleep Campaign, there are **3,500** infant sleep-related deaths each year... This is still far too many though!
- Because of the Back to Sleep Campaign, more than **80,000** children are alive today.
- If you put your baby to sleep on the back, you cut the risk of death in half!

# How to Protect Your Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 2

**Place your baby on a firm sleep surface like a safety-approved mattress covered with a tight-fitting sheet**



# Sleep Surface Matters

- Never place your baby to sleep on pillows, quilts, sheepskins, or other soft surfaces.
- Soft bedding increases the risk of death by 5 times.
- Babies who sleep on the stomach *and* are placed on soft bedding increase their risk of death 21 times!

# How to Protect Your Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 3

Keep loose bedding, soft animals, and toys out of your baby's sleep area





# Dangerous Bedding

- Do not use pillows, quilts, loose blankets, or other soft bedding... These products can lead to suffocation.
- Do not use bumper pads.
- Do not place stuffed animals in the crib.
- Decorate your baby's room, not your baby's crib.
  - Nothing should be in your baby's sleep area but your baby!

**STRANGULATION**  
**ENTRAPMENT**  
**SUFFOCATION**



A can of soda should NOT be able to fit between the slats (< 2-3/8 inches).



The slats are too wide...



**New crib standards make the need for bumper pads unnecessary!**

**Q: How can bumper pads injure my baby?**

# No More Bumper Pads

- A bumper pad is not necessary because new crib standards require that slats are closer together. This prevents head entrapment.
  - Babies have suffocated against the soft pillows/pads of a bumper.
  - Babies have also been strangled by the bumper pad ties.
  - Lastly, a baby's head can be trapped between the crib or mattress and a firm bumper pad.
  - If worried about legs getting caught in slats, use wearable blanket.

# How to Protect Your Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 4

Do not allow smoking around your baby





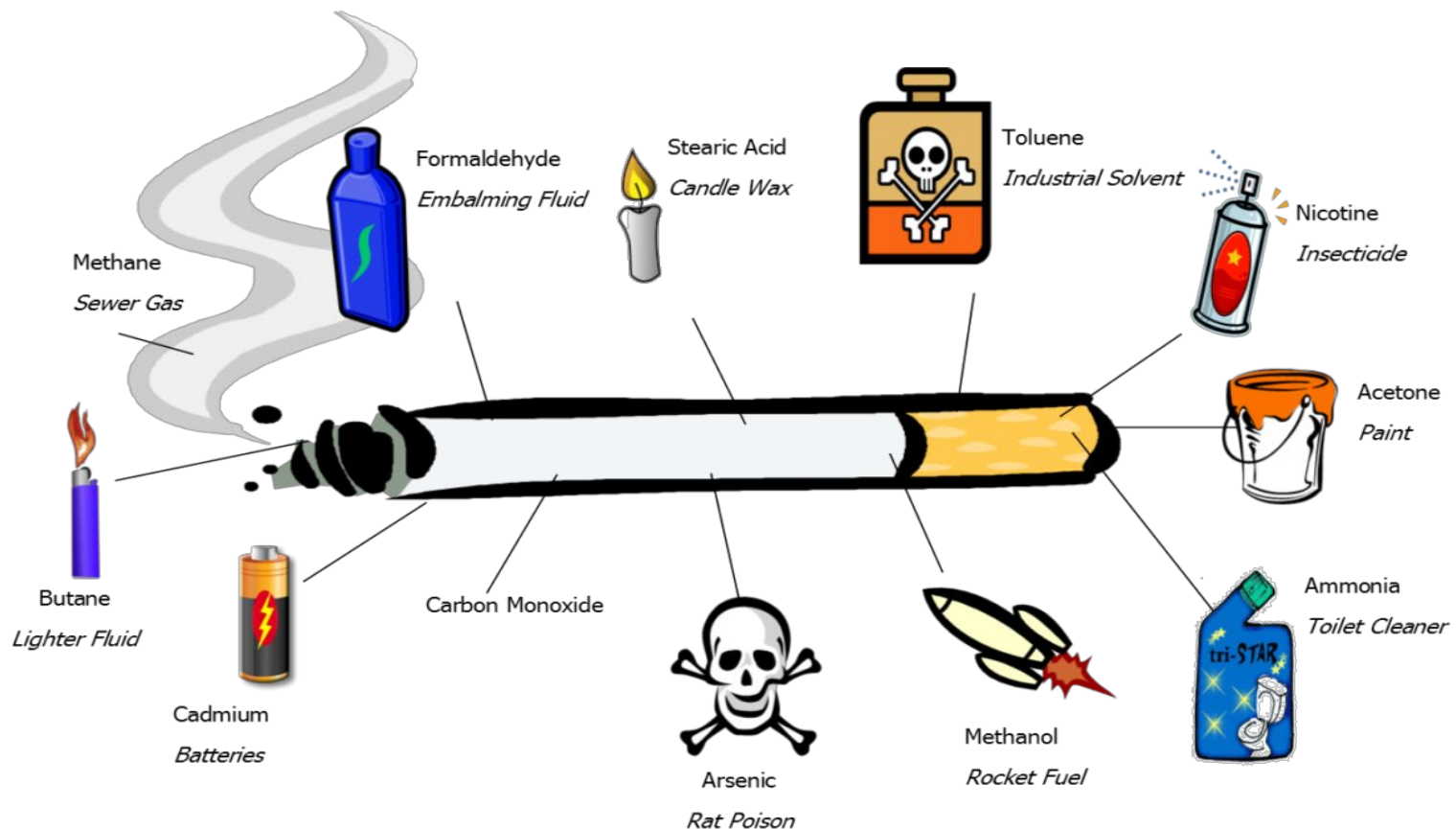
# No Smoking

- Do not smoke before or after the birth of your baby.
- Do not allow other people to smoke around your baby.
- If you must smoke, do it away from your baby and change your clothing before handling your baby again.
  - Exposure to passive smoke in the house doubles a baby's risk of SIDS.

# Types of Smoke

- Three types of cigarette smoke:
  - **First-hand smoke:** This is when smoke is inhaled directly from smoking cigarettes.
  - **Second-hand smoke:** The smoke is inhaled by someone who is not smoking cigarettes (either from the cigarette itself or blown by the smoker).
  - **Third-hand smoke:** This is when residual gas particles from smoke fall on every surface where a cigarette was lit. This includes; clothing, hair, furniture, and more.

# Q: What is in a cigarette?



# How to Protect Your Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 5

Keep your baby's sleep area close to but separate from where you and others sleep





# Room-Sharing

- Your baby should never sleep in a bed or on a couch, chair, or any other surface with any adult, other child, or pet.
  - But your baby should sleep in the same room as you.
  - Sharing the room (instead of a separate room for baby) can reduce SIDS risk by 50%!
- If you bring your baby into bed to breastfeed, put the baby back into his/her crib, bassinet, or portable crib when you are done.
- Bedsharing greatly increases a baby's risk of sleep-related death even if you do not drink, smoke, or use drugs
- Remember: You cannot control fatigue. Room sharing is the safest alternative.



## Q: Why is bed sharing unsafe?

**NOTE: Both mother and baby were awake when this picture was taken.**

# Answer

- **Bed sharing can increase a baby's risk of sleep-related death by 10 times.**
  - Parents have accidentally rolled over on their baby resulting in suffocation.
- **Couches are especially dangerous. Your baby has a 50 times increased risk of death from sleeping on a couch.**





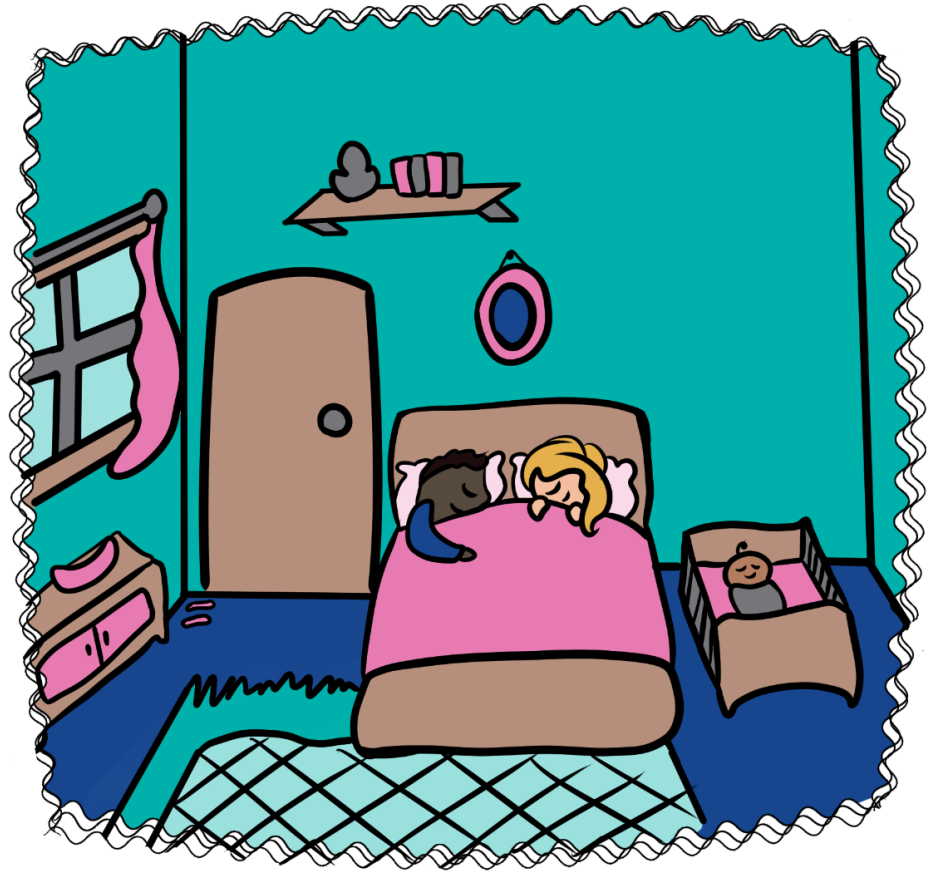
**Q: Why is it dangerous for my baby to sleep in an adult bed?**



# Dangers of an Adult Bed

- Your baby can become trapped or wedged between the wall and the bed.
  - Suffocation and death can occur.
- Pillows, loose sheets, blankets, comforters and other soft materials are dangerous.
- **FACT:** Half of the infants in the U.S. who die of sleep-related deaths were found sleeping with their parents!

Q: How  
can I set  
up my  
bedroom  
for safety?



# How to Set Up Your Room

- Keep the crib away from windows.
- Place the crib against an interior wall of your home.
- Place your bed between the crib and the exterior wall or the wall that is exposed to the outside of the house or apartment building.

# How to Protect Your Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 6

Think about giving your baby a clean and dry pacifier at sleep time



# Pacifiers

- Pacifiers have been shown to be protective against SIDS.
  - Researchers do not know how it works, but many studies have found the same result.
- Offer a pacifier to your baby, but do not force him/her to take it.
- If you are breastfeeding, wait 3 to 4 weeks (or until breastfeeding has been established) before offering a pacifier.
- Do not coat the pacifier with sweet liquid as doing so can lead to cavities when the baby's teeth come in.



# How to Protect Your Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 7

**Do not let your baby overheat during sleep**



# Overheating

- Dress your baby in lightweight sleep clothing such as a Sleep Sack or other wearable blanket.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics no longer recommend tucking in babies with blankets. Loose blankets can cover the face and cause suffocation.
- Instead, use additional layers of clothing if the baby is cold.
- You can use a blanket to swaddle your baby, but make sure it is lightweight and it is away from the infant's head. The blanket should not be higher than the baby's shoulders.
- Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for an adult. Do not overbundle your baby with too many layers of clothes.
  - Studies show that an overheated baby is at increased risk of death.
- Remember: Never allow a loose blanket in the sleep area!

# How to Protect Your Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 8

Avoid products that are not consistent with safe sleep practices!



# Unsafe Products

- Items such as co-sleepers, in bed sleepers have not been tested for safety and effectiveness and are not recommended as part of a safe sleeping environment.
- Items labeled as “sleepers,” “nappers,” or “positioners” should not be used for sleep.





Q: Why are pillows and positioners dangerous?



# Answer

- Soft bedding increases the risk of suffocation and re-breathing.
- Pillows, quilts, comforters, and other soft surfaces are dangerous when placed under your baby or loose in your baby's sleep area.
- Positioners have not been shown to be effective against SIDS, suffocation, or reflux.
  - Babies have died from suffocation or entrapment with positioners or wedges.
- It is safest for your baby to sleep on a firm surface.



Q: Are car seats, swings and other sitting devices safe for sleep?

# Car Seats, Swings and Other Sitting Devices

- Car seats, swings, and other sitting devices should not be used for routine sleep.
- Babies can and have suffocated in these types of devices due to **positional asphyxiation**.
- If a baby falls asleep in a sitting device, they should be removed and placed in a safe sleeping environment as soon as possible.
- A baby can sleep in a car seat only while inside a moving vehicle. Once you remove the car seat from the car, the sleeping child should be relocated to a safe sleeping environment.

# How to Protect Your Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 9

**Do not rely on home monitors to reduce the risk of SIDS or other sleep-related infant deaths**



# Home Monitors

- Home monitors do not reduce the risk of SIDS.
- A home monitor can be useful in alerting you of your baby's needs (for example, if your infant is crying).



# How to Protect Your Baby from Sleep-Related Death

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## Number 10

**Provide supervised Tummy Time**



# Tummy Time

- Give your baby supervised Tummy Time every day when he/she is awake.
  - Tummy Time does not have to be on the floor. Holding and playing with your baby counts, too.
- Tummy time strengthens neck and shoulder muscles that are used to acquire many infant motor milestones.

Remember: Tummy to play  
and back to sleep!

# The Magic of TUMMY TIME!!

## Before You Start:

- Baby awake and alert
- Use a firm surface
- Baby should be supervised at all times

## BACK

- Posture strength
- Back strength
- Skeletal alignment

## LEGS

- Helps develop muscles for crawling

## HIPS

- Stretches/develops hips muscles

## TUMMY

- Helps with tummy issues (gas, constipation)

## HANDS

- Formation of hand arches for fine motor skills

## NECK

- Strengthens neck muscles
- Improves head control

## BRAIN

- Sensory integration
- Cognitive development
- Environmental awareness

## HEAD

- Prevents flat head syndrome (plagiocephaly)

## EYES

- Visual motor development
- Depth perception

## ARMS

- Strengthens arms for reaching and crawling

## Include in Daily Activities:

- Towel drying after bath
- After diaper changes
- Burping over parent's lap
- On parent's chest
- Lotion/Massage
- Playing "airplane"
- Mirror play

A close-up photograph of a young Black baby lying on their stomach, propped up on their elbows. The baby has a joyful expression, with a wide smile and eyes looking down. They have dark, curly hair. The background is a plain, light color.

**Q:** Won't my baby get flat spots sleeping on the back?

# Flat Spots

- Tummy Time is the most effective way to combat flat spots.
- Normally, if any flat spots develop, they will disappear in the months after the baby learns to sit up and roll over.
- Changing the direction that your baby sleeps in the crib each week is also an effective way to combat flat spots.
- Additionally, Limit the amount of time your baby lies in bouncers, carriers, and car seats.





Q: Do babies sleep comfortably on their backs?

# Yes!

- Babies can – and do – sleep comfortably on the back, especially when it is started early.
- Babies have a very different sleep cycle than adults... It is normal for a baby to wake up every 3 to 4 hours, and this is a “good sleeper”!
- Researchers believe that sleeping too deeply can put a baby at an increased risk of sleep-related death. This is one of the dangers of stomach sleeping.
- If a baby is fussy, swaddling can help improve sleep patterns.
- Do not put a fussy baby to sleep on the stomach to sleep. The baby’s safety is most important.





**Q:** But my mother, grandmother, or best friend put her baby to sleep on his/her stomach, and that baby was fine...

# We Know Better So We Do Better!

- Every day, new knowledge is gained. We often learn that truths from the past were not correct.
  - For example, in the past, an infant did not have to ride in a car seat. Today, we know car seats protect children from serious injury. Now it is a finable offense if an infant does not ride in a car seat.
- The same is true for infant sleep... Extensive research has proven that a baby is safest when placed on the back to sleep. **ALWAYS** use the back to sleep until age 1 year.





Q: What else can I do to  
keep babies safe?



# Tell Everyone!

- About 1 in 5 SIDS deaths occur while the baby is in the care of someone else.
  - Often the caregiver has placed the baby on the stomach to sleep. When a baby normally sleeps on the back and is placed on the stomach to sleep, it is called “unaccustomed tummy sleeping.” These babies have an 18-time increased risk of sleep-related death!
- Talk about safe sleep to child care providers, grandparents, babysitters, and friends... Anyone who cares for your baby!



**Q:** I know I shouldn't sleep with my baby, but he/she is fussy.  
What can I do?

# Use the 5 S's

1. **Swaddling:** It provides warmth and security – the same way your baby felt in the womb.
  2. **Side/Stomach Position:** Hold your baby on the left side to help with digestion. Once asleep, place your baby in the crib on the back.
  3. **Shushing:** This imitates the noise in the womb, making your baby feel calm and safe. It may work best when done loudly.
  4. **Swinging:** You can rock your baby in your arms or use an infant swing.
  5. **Sucking:** It is natural, and babies enjoy sucking even when not hungry. A baby cannot cry and suck at the same time!
- A soothing bath or infant massage may also help quiet your baby.
  - Or try taking your baby to a quiet area. A change in environment often helps to relax a fussy baby.





**Q:** Is swaddling safe for my baby?

# Answer

- Swaddling has NOT been shown to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Swaddling is useful for calming fussy babies and for keeping babies on the back.
- Swaddling must be done correctly to avoid possible hazards, including: overheating, face covering, and abnormal hip development
- If you swaddle, you still **MUST** follow safe sleep practices.
  - Prone swaddling: 13 times increased risk of SIDS
  - Side swaddling: 3 times increased risk of SIDS
- If you swaddle, discontinue as soon as baby starts to try to roll over!





**Q:** Are vaccines safe for my baby?

# Yes!

- Evidence has shown that vaccines are safe and protective against SIDS!
- The **risk of SIDS is cut in half** by immunizations.
- Immunizations are recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC).



**Q:** Does breastfeeding help protect against SIDS?

# Yes!

- Breast milk is **protective against SIDS**.
  - Breastfeeding can reduce a baby's risk of SIDS by 50%!
  - Breastfed babies are more easily aroused from sleep than babies who are formula-fed.
- Breastfeeding **decreases infections**, especially diarrhea and respiratory infections which are associated with an increased vulnerability to SIDS.
  - Breast milk contains maternal antibodies, micronutrients, and special proteins that promote immune system benefits



# Breastfeed Safely!

- Breastfeed **SAFELY!** You can breastfeed in your bed at night, but remove dangerous items from your sleep area (loose blankets, pillows) and be sure to place your baby back in his/her own separate sleep area when you are finished. If you accidentally fall asleep with your baby, return the baby to his sleep area as soon as possible to reduce the risk of harm.
  - **NEVER** breastfeed on a couch or recliner when you are tired. It is the most dangerous place a baby can sleep!



# Tragic True Story

A mother was concerned that her infant had a tummy ache, so she placed the baby to sleep on his stomach and laying on a pillow. Just four hours later, this mother found her baby dead.



# Talking Points

- Placing your baby on the stomach on soft bedding (such as a pillow) increases the risk of death by 21 times.
- A baby who usually sleeps on the back and is suddenly placed to sleep on the stomach has an 18 times greater risk of dying.
- The risk of death from these two factors is increased almost 40-times!

# Tragic True Story

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The baby was sleeping in his crib, in his own room. When the baby started to cry early one morning, an older sibling came in the room.

Wanting to be a good helper, the sibling picked up the baby and placed him in bed with her. When the mother woke up later to feed the baby, she searched the house in a panic until she found the baby trapped underneath the sleeping sibling. The infant was resuscitated but was found later to be brain dead and was removed from life support.



# Talking Points

- **Bed sharing increases a baby's risk of sleep-related death!**
- **Babies dying of SIDS are over 5 times more likely to have shared a bed with other children.**
- **A separate but close sleep area is safest for your baby.**

# Don't Let Your Baby Be the Next Tragic Story

*For safest sleep put your baby  
Alone • on the back • in a crib!*

## safe sleep tips

- 1 Baby should sleep on a firm crib mattress, with tightly fitted sheet.
- 2 Baby should sleep alone, in an uncluttered crib.
- 3 Don't make the room too hot.
- 4 Never let anyone sleep with your baby.
- 5 Baby should sleep on back at all times.
- 6 No smoking around baby.



*For more information on ways to protect your  
baby from accidental sleep-related death  
go to [www.cribsforkids.org](http://www.cribsforkids.org) or call  
888-721-CRIB.*



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