

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continuing Education Activity on Risk Reduction for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Other Sleep-Related Causes of Infant Death: Curriculum for Nurses

Nurses, physicians, and other health care providers should encourage parents and other caregivers to do the following to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death:

Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night, to reduce the risk of SIDS. The back sleep position is the safest position for all babies, including preterm babies. Every sleep time counts.

Use a firm sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety-approved* crib, covered by a fitted sheet, to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death. Firm sleep surfaces can include mattresses in safety-approved* cribs, bassinets, and portable play areas. Do not use a car seat, carrier, swing, or similar product as the baby's everyday sleep area. Never place babies to sleep on soft surfaces, such as on a couch or sofa, pillows, quilts, sheepskins, or blankets.

Room sharing—keeping the baby's sleep area separate from your sleep area, but in the same room where you sleep—and not bed sharing reduces the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death. Your baby should not sleep in an adult bed, on a couch, or on a chair alone, with you, or with anyone else. If you bring your baby into your bed to feed, make sure to put him or her back in a separate sleep area, such as a safety-approved* crib, bassinet, or portable play area, next to where you sleep when you are finished.

Keep soft objects, toys, crib bumpers, and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death. Don't use pillows, blankets, quilts, sheepskins, or crib bumpers anywhere in your baby's sleep area. Evidence does not support using crib bumpers to prevent injury. In fact, crib bumpers can cause serious injuries and even death. Keeping them out of baby's sleep area is the best way to avoid these dangers.

To reduce the risk of SIDS, women should:

- Get regular health care during pregnancy, and
- Not smoke, drink alcohol, or use illegal drugs during pregnancy or after the baby is born.

To reduce the risk of SIDS, do not smoke during pregnancy, and do not smoke or allow smoking around your baby.

* For more information on crib safety guidelines, call the Consumer Product Safety Commission at 1-800-638-2772 or visit its website at <http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/cribs/>.

Breastfeed your baby to reduce the risk of SIDS. Breastfeeding has many health benefits for mother and infant. If you bring your baby into your bed to breastfeed, make sure to put him or her back in a separate sleep area in your room, such as a safety-approved* crib, bassinet, or portable play area, in your room next to where you sleep when you are finished.

Give your baby a dry pacifier that is not attached to a string for naps and at night to reduce the risk of SIDS. But don't force the baby to use it. If the pacifier falls out of the baby's mouth during sleep, there is no need to put the pacifier back in. Wait until the baby is used to breastfeeding before trying a pacifier.

Do not let your baby get too hot during sleep. Dress your baby in no more than one layer more of clothing than an adult would wear to be comfortable. Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for an adult.

Follow your health care provider's guidance on your baby's vaccines and regular health checkups.

Avoid products that claim to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death. These wedges, positioners, and other products have not been tested for safety or effectiveness.

Do not use home health or breathing monitors to reduce the risk of SIDS. If you have questions about using monitors for other health conditions, talk with your child's health care provider.

Give your infant plenty of Tummy Time when he or she is awake and when someone is watching. Supervised Tummy Time helps your baby's neck, shoulder, and arm muscles get stronger. It also helps to prevent flat spots on the back of your baby's head. Holding the baby upright and limiting time in carriers and bouncers can also help prevent flat spots on the back of baby's head.

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