

# Why is safe sleep important?

Safe sleep guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics focus on actions you and others can take to help your baby sleep safely and to reduce your baby's risk of dying while sleeping.

It is important for all caregivers, not just parents, to know about and to practice safe sleep, every sleep. This includes grandparents, aunts, uncles, babysitters, childcare providers, and anyone else who might care for your baby.

**Simple, consistent actions can make a big difference in keeping your baby safe.**



# Can this really happen to me or someone I know?

Yes — it can happen to anyone and occurs more often than you think.

- In South Carolina, sleep-related accidents are the fifth leading cause of infant deaths.
- A sleep-related death is **12 times** more likely to occur to an infant than a motor vehicle accident.
- Putting your baby to sleep in a room with you, but on a separate surface, reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome by **up to 50%**.

*Talk to your health care provider if you need help providing a safe sleep environment for your baby.*

**Scan for more information:**



# Safe Sleep, Every Sleep

Because even one death from unsafe sleep is too many



**SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

# Know the ABCs of Safe Sleep

## **A** Alone

Babies should **sleep alone in their own safe sleep space**. This means no other people, pets or objects like toys, bumper pads, blankets, sleep positioners or pillows are in your baby's sleep space. Babies can choke or suffocate on these items.

.....

## **B** Back

Always put your baby to sleep **flat on their back**, with no props, both for naps and at night. Placing your baby on their back to sleep helps to keep your baby's airway open.

.....

## **C** Crib

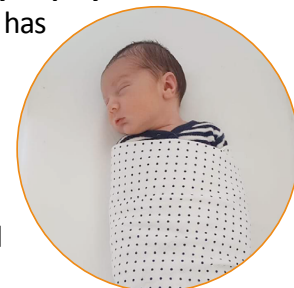
Use a **non-inclined** sleep surface such as a crib, bassinet or play yard with a **firm, flat mattress, and tightly fitting sheet** that meets the safety standards of Consumer Product Safety Commission.



## Additional Safety Tips

- **Share a room, not a bed!** Place a crib or bassinet near your bed to easily reach your baby for comfort.
- **Use a safe sleep surface every time your baby sleeps**, such as a crib, bassinet or play yard. Avoid adult beds, chairs, sofas, air mattresses, pillows, cushions, or putting baby to sleep with another child.
- **Avoid sleeping with your baby next to you on a bed, recliner, or sofa.** Your baby can slip down or under you and suffocate.
- **Place your baby's crib several feet away from any windows with blinds, curtain cords or baby monitor cords.** Your baby can strangle on these items.
- **Move your sleeping baby from car seats or strollers as soon as possible.** These are not safe sleep surfaces.
- **Do not use a modified crib** and make sure the space between posts/spindles is not larger than two finger-widths.

- **Use a phone or kitchen timer during feedings** to remind you to put your baby back in the crib.
- **Back to sleep, tummy to play!** Make sure your baby has supervised tummy time while awake every day.
- **Babies should not be swaddled beyond 2 months of age** or once they start to roll over.
- **Dress your baby in a onesie or footed pajamas.** Avoid using hats or mittens.
- **Wearable blankets are great alternatives to using loose blankets** and safest for your baby.
- **Schedule and go to all well-child visits.**
- **Avoid tobacco, alcohol, vapes, and other substance use** during pregnancy and after your baby is born.
- **Breastfeed your baby** for at least 6 months or as long as you can.
- **A pacifier may be used once breastfeeding has been established.**
- **Share safe sleep messaging.** Share this information with anyone who will be taking care of your baby and *remember:*



Unsafe sleep deaths **are** preventable.