



# Safe Sleep for Your Baby

Each year in the United States, thousands of babies die suddenly and unexpectedly. Some of these deaths result from **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)** and other sleep-related causes of infant death, such as suffocation.



**Breastfeeding**  
reduces the  
risk of SIDS

Babies who are breastfed or are fed expressed breastmilk are at lower risk for SIDS compared with babies who were never fed breastmilk. According to research, the longer you exclusively breastfeed your baby (meaning not supplementing with formula), the lower his or her risk of SIDS.

▶ If you bring baby into your bed for feeding, remove all soft items and bedding from the area. When finished, put baby back in a separate sleep area made for infants.\*

▶ If you fall asleep while feeding baby in your bed, place him or her back in the separate sleep area as soon as you wake up.



## Safe Sleep Environment

To **reduce the risk** of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death:



▶ Always place baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night.



▶ Share your room with baby. Keep baby close to your bed, on a separate surface designed for infants.



▶ Use a firm and flat sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety-approved crib\*, covered by a fitted sheet with no other bedding or soft items in the sleep area.

\* A crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard that follows the safety standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is recommended. For information on crib safety, contact the CPSC at 1-800-638-2772 or <http://www.cpsc.gov>.



Since the 1990s, when the U.S. back-sleeping recommendations were first released and public awareness efforts began, the overall U.S. SIDS rate has dropped.

But, as SIDS rates have declined, deaths from other sleep-related causes, such as suffocation, have increased, and certain groups remain at higher risk for SIDS than others.

For example, African American and American Indian/Alaska Native babies are at higher risk for SIDS than white, Hispanic, or Asian/Pacific Islander babies.



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Learn more about SIDS and safe infant sleep:  
<http://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov>