

A SIDS AND KIDS PUBLICATION

safe wrapping

GUIDELINES
FOR SAFE
WRAPPING OF
YOUNG BABIES



'Sleep Safe, My Baby'

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Benefits of Safe Wrapping

- Wrapping is a useful method to help babies settle and sleep on their back. Scientific studies have shown that wrapping can have a calming, sleep-promoting effect on young babies.
- Studies have shown that wrapping can promote more sustained sleep and reduce the frequency of spontaneous awakenings.
- Some studies have shown that wrapping in infants sleeping on their back is associated with reduced Sudden Infant Death risk.
- An alternative to wrapping is to use a safe infant sleeping bag.

Alert



Tummy sleeping increases the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and must be avoided. Placing a wrapped baby on their tummy to sleep is especially dangerous as it prevents them moving to a safe position.

If you wrap your baby, consider baby's stage of development. Leave arms free once the startle reflex disappears around 3 months. Most babies eventually resist being wrapped. This usually happens around the age of six months. When baby is able to roll from their back to their tummy and then onto their back again during supervised play (usually 4-6 months) discontinue the use of a wrap. The wrap may prevent an older baby who has turned onto their tummy during sleep from returning to the back sleeping position.

How to safely wrap your baby



1 Place baby off-centre (to left or right) with top of wrap level with shoulders.



2 Fold baby's arm across chest and bring shorter side of wrap across baby's arm and tuck firmly under baby.



3 Bring larger side of wrap across and tuck under baby.

4



Bring the bottom of the wrap on top of baby.

5



Fold the bottom of the wrap under baby.

6



Always sleep baby on their back with head and face uncovered.

Safe Wrapping

- Recommended fabrics for wrapping include a muslin or light cotton sheet or wrap. Bunny rugs and blankets are not as safe for wrapping as they may cause over-heating
- For wrapping to be effective, wrap needs to be firm but not too tight. Techniques that use tight wrapping with legs straight and together increase the risk of abnormal hip development. Loose wraps are hazardous as they can cover baby's head and face
- Do not wrap baby higher than the shoulders so baby's face and head do not become covered. Allow for hip and chest wall expansion when wrapping
- Babies must not be over-dressed under the wrap, e.g. use only a singlet and nappy in warm weather or light grow suit in cooler weather
- Use a wrapping technique suitable for baby's developmental age. Reduce the effects of the Moro or startle reflex for a younger baby by including arms in wrap
- Help an older baby stay on their back by wrapping their lower body but leaving their hands and arms free to self soothe



0-3 MONTHS



3-6 MONTHS

Alert



Sharing a sleep surface with a baby may increase the risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy. Sharing a sleep surface with a baby is especially dangerous if the baby is wrapped.

Safe Sleeping Recommendations

- Sleep baby on back from birth, not on tummy or side
- Sleep baby with head and face uncovered
- Keep baby smoke free before birth and after
- Provide a safe sleeping environment day and night
- Sleep baby in their own safe sleeping place in the same room as an adult care-giver for the first six to twelve months of life
- Breastfeed baby

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For further information talk to your midwife, child and family health nurse or doctor; call SIDS and Kids on

0800 164 455

or visit www.sidsandkids.org.nz



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