



SAFE SLEEPING

**FOR
your baby**

Lower the Risk of SIDS

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the death of an infant less than one year of age that is sudden and remains unexplained after a complete investigation. A complete investigation includes an autopsy, examination of the death scene, and a review of the clinical history.

SIDS can happen in any home. Why babies die from SIDS is not completely understood, but there are actions you can take to reduce the risk of SIDS. Make sure you talk about the following safe sleeping practices with everyone who cares for your baby.

BACK TO SLEEP FOR EVERY SLEEP

Place your baby on his back for every sleep to lower the risk of SIDS.

EVERY SURFACE YOUR BABY SLEEPS ON SHOULD BE FIRM, FLAT, AND FREE OF SOFT OBJECTS

Your baby's sleep environment should be firm and flat with no loose bedding or soft objects such as pillows, quilts, bumper pads, or stuffed toys. Sitting devices such as car seats, swings, and infant carriers should not be used for routine sleep.

BREASTFEED YOUR BABY

If possible, exclusively breastfeed your baby for 6 months, but any breastfeeding is more protective against SIDS than no breastfeeding.



SHARE A ROOM WITH YOUR BABY WITHOUT SHARING A BED

The safest place for your baby to sleep is on a separate sleep surface close to your bed for at least the first six months of life. Research suggests that sharing a sleep surface with your baby increases the risk of SIDS if you or your partner:

- Smoke
- Have drunk alcohol recently
- Have taken medication or drugs that make you sleep more heavily
- Are very tired

The risk of co-sleeping is further increased if your baby is less than 3 months old.

DON'T LET YOUR BABY GET TOO WARM

Babies who get too warm are at an increased risk of SIDS. Your baby may be too warm if she is damp and sweating, if her cheeks are flushed, or if she develops a heat rash. Keep her sleep environment at a temperature that is comfortable for you when lightly dressed. Over-bundling and covering of her face should be avoided. Take your baby out of snowsuits and other heavy clothes to sleep. Use sleep clothing that does not pose a hazard of covering your baby's head.

CREATE A SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR BABY DURING PREGNANCY AND AFTER BIRTH

Babies who are exposed to tobacco smoke before or after they are born have an increased risk of SIDS.



AVOID ALCOHOL AND ILLICIT DRUGS DURING PREGNANCY AND AFTER BIRTH

Babies who are born to mothers who drink alcohol or use illicit drugs during pregnancy or after birth are at an increased risk of SIDS.

REMINDER: PREVENT FLAT HEAD IN YOUR BABY BY DOING PLENTY OF TUMMY TIME

Your baby can develop a flat spot on his head if too much time is spent lying with his head in one direction. A baby tends to look out into his room from his crib to watch you coming and going or to look at interesting objects. Each night, position your baby so his head is at a different end of the crib, encouraging him to turn his head to a different side. Flat head (plagiocephaly) in your baby can also be prevented by ensuring supervised tummy time when he is awake. It is important for your baby to spend time on his tummy. This helps him develop neck, back, and trunk muscles. Time on his tummy should only take place when he is awake and when someone is watching him.

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preventioninstitute
our goal is **healthy** children

1319 Colony Street, Saskatoon, SK S7N 2Z1
Bus. 306.651.4300 Fax. 306.651.4301
www.skprevention.ca

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