



574.753.1395

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Sleeping

Most newborn babies sleep more than they do anything else. Your baby will develop his or her own sleeping pattern. It is normal for a tiny baby to sleep 16 to 20 hours a day. Take advantage of your baby's sleep periods to get the rest that you need.

A Safe Crib

Doctors agree that the safest place for your baby to sleep is in his or her crib in your room. Make sure your baby is never in the same bed with an adult who is very tired, overweight, smokes, has been drinking, and/or using drugs, or is taking medicines that can cause sleepiness.

Your baby's bed should have:

- No missing, loose, broken or improperly installed screws or other loose hardware on the crib or the mattress support.
- No more than 2 and 3/8 inches between crib slats so a baby's body cannot fit through the slats. If a soda can fits easily through the slats on a crib, the spaces between the slats are too wide.
- A firm, snug-fitting mattress so a baby cannot get trapped between the mattress and the side of the crib.
- No cracked or peeling paint, to prevent lead poisoning.
- No splinters or rough edges.
- No quilts, comforters, duvets, blankets, stuffed animals, or bumper pads.

Sleep Positioning

Sleeping on their back.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all healthy full-term infants sleep on their backs to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

- Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep (unless your baby's doctor says to do something else for the baby's health).
- Do not put your baby on his or her side or stomach because it increases the chances of SIDS.
- Do not use wedges, cushions, blankets, or anything else when placing your baby to sleep.
- Do not use fluffy blankets or soft bedding.
- A certain amount of "tummy time" while the infant is awake and observed is recommended for developmental reasons and to help prevent flat spots on the back of the head.