

SIDS: Steps to keep your baby safe

As a parent, you do a lot to keep your baby safe. That includes when you put your baby to sleep. Sudden infant death syndrome can strike a healthy baby at any time. It has no known warnings or red flags. But there are steps you can take to reduce your baby's risk for SIDS, especially at bedtime. Taking these steps can help you and your baby rest easy.



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Quick facts on SIDS:

1 The exact cause of SIDS is not known, but some studies show that irregularities in breathing, heart rate or body temperature could play a part. Risks drop a lot after a baby's first year of life.



2 Babies should always be put to sleep on their backs. They should sleep on a firm mattress with a fitted sheet. Soft surfaces can be a risk for SIDS and suffocation.

3 Babies should sleep in the same room as their caregivers, but they should have their own sleep area. Babies who sleep in adult beds are at a higher risk of SIDS.

4 Cribs and other baby sleep areas should not include blankets, pillows, toys or bumpers. Babies can overheat easily. They should be dressed in no more than one layer more than adults would to be comfortable.

5 Breastfeeding has been shown to help prevent SIDS. That is particularly true in babies' first six months of life.



>> For more information on SIDS, visit www.nichd.nih.gov/sts