

Safe sleep for babies

The Canadian Pediatric Society and Health Canada recommend that babies sleep alone in a crib on a firm mattress designed for babies.

To create a safe place for your baby to sleep, you will need:

- **A safe crib:** Follow the manufacturer's instructions to put the crib together. Make sure nothing is cracked or broken.

Cribs made before 1986 or those without a Canada Safety Association label are not safe to use.

- Adult beds, armchairs, waterbeds, couches, daybeds or any “make-shift” bed are not safe places for your baby to sleep.
- Car seats are important safety devices for travel. When you get home, always put your baby to sleep on his/her back in the crib.



- **A firm mattress:** The mattress should be flat, clean and tight against all sides of the crib.
 - **A tightly fitted sheet:** Use one sheet that fits snugly over the mattress.
 - **Nothing else in the crib:** Do not use pillows, blankets or other soft bedding such as bumper pads. Do not put any toys or loose items in your baby's crib.
 - **A comfortable temperature:** Babies can get overheated from too many clothes or if the room is hot. If your baby is sweating or feels hot, take off a layer of clothing. Recheck your baby to make sure he or she no longer feels hot.
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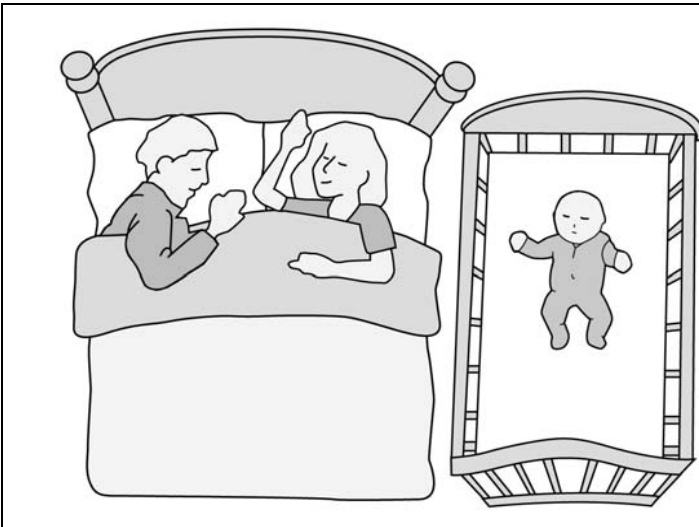
Back to sleep



Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep.

Putting a baby on his or her back to sleep is known to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Where should my baby sleep?



For the first 6 months, the safest place for your baby's crib is in your bedroom.

If this is not possible, place the crib in the next room.

Sharing your room with your baby or “co-rooming” has been shown to:

- make it easier to breastfeed your baby often
- help you get to know your baby
- reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or SIDS

Sharing your bed or “co-sleeping”:

The Canadian Pediatric Society and Health Canada recommend that babies sleep alone in a crib on a firm mattress designed for babies. Adults, children and pets should not sleep with your baby.

Although sharing your bed with your baby may seem natural, this can be very dangerous. Babies have been hurt or died by:

- falling off an adult bed
- being trapped between a mattress and headboard, or a mattress and wall
- being smothered
- sharing a bed with an adult who is extremely tired, or impaired by alcohol or drugs

Despite the risks, some parents may still choose to share their bed with their baby. Some suggestions that may reduce the risk of harm are:

- Do not use a heavy blanket, quilt, duvet or comforter. No pillows should be near your baby.
- Do not place your baby against a wall. He or she could become trapped between the wall and the mattress.
- Place your baby far from the edges of the bed. Your baby could fall off or become trapped between the headboard and the mattress.
- Never share your bed with your baby when you are very tired, have taken drugs or medication that make you sleep more heavily, or have been drinking alcohol or smoking.

**To make sure your baby sleeps safely,
check that each person that cares for your baby
knows this information.**

For more information, visit these websites:

- Public Health Agency of Canada www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance_0-2/sids/index-eng.php
- Health Canada <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/advisories-avis/aw-am/sleep-sommeil-eng.php> and <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/kids/safe-sleep/>
- Canadian Pediatric Society
www.caringforkids.cps.ca/pregnancybabies/safesleepforbaby.htm

In the Hamilton area, you can also call Health Connections at 905-546-3550.
If you live outside the Hamilton area, call your local Public Health Unit.