

What about bed-sharing?

Bed-sharing means a baby is sleeping on the same surface (bed, sofa, couch, etc.) with another person.

Adult beds, children's beds and soft surfaces like sofas or upholstered chairs are not safe for infant sleep. Babies can fall, be strangled or suffocate if they get trapped in cracks or under bedding, pillows, cushions, or another person.

Situations that carry the highest risk to babies should always be avoided:

- Never sleep with your baby on a sofa or similar soft, padded surface.
- Never sleep with your baby if you or your partner:
 - are a smoker
 - have taken alcohol or drugs (over-the-counter, prescription, or illegal) which make you less able to respond
 - are overtired (for example, from stress or lack of sleep)

If you are not able to provide a crib, cradle, or bassinet for your baby to sleep in, be careful to

- put your baby on his or her back to sleep on a firm, flat surface
- avoid soft surfaces – no water-filled, air-filled, pillow-top, or sagging mattresses; no sofas or upholstered chairs, no loose bedding
- prevent falls; never leave a baby alone on a raised surface

- make sure your baby can't get trapped between the mattress and headboard, footboard, wall, or anything else
- keep blankets and pillows far away from your baby and make sure baby's head is uncovered
- prevent overheating; keep the room comfortably cool
- keep other children and pets out of the bed
- know where your baby is at all times. If you are sharing a bed with your partner, make sure he/she knows your baby is in the bed.

Taking these steps might reduce risk, but it does not make bed-sharing safe. Bed-sharing is not recommended by Alberta Health Services, the Canadian Paediatric Society, or Public Health Agency of Canada.

Babies are safest in their own crib. If you can't provide a crib, cradle, or bassinet for your baby, talk to your public health nurse or Health Link Alberta to find out where you can get help.

For Baby's Safety:

The safest place for babies to sleep is:

- on their back
- in an uncluttered crib, cradle, or bassinet that meets government safety standards,
- near where the parent sleeps for at least the first 6 months.

For more information:

About infant sleep or caring for your child, visit www.albertahealthservices.ca/parents.asp

For help to quit smoking, visit www.albertaquits.ca or call toll-free: **1-866-710-QUIT**

For crib, cradle, or bassinet standards, visit www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps

For tummy time and to prevent flat areas on babies head, visit www.albertahealthservices.ca/1585.asp



HEALTH LINK ALBERTA:

24-hour nurse advice and health information

Toll-free **1-866-408-LINK (5465)**

Calgary and area **403-943-LINK (5465)**

Edmonton and area **780-408-LINK (5465)**



Safe Sleep

for baby's first year



What you can do to help prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and sleep-related deaths in infancy



Safe sleep for baby's first year

Research tells us there are things that put infants at higher risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related causes of death.

You can reduce the risk with these simple steps:



Put baby on back to sleep – every sleep.



Use a crib that meets government safety standards.
Keep baby warm, not hot.
Share a room, not a bed.



Keep spaces smoke-free before and after birth.



Breastfeeding helps keep baby healthy and safe.



Here is how:



Put baby on back to sleep

Always put babies on their back to sleep, whether nap time or night time, at home or with a caregiver. Sleeping on their back lowers the risk of SIDS.

Even when babies can roll over on their own, put them on their back to sleep. If they roll over on their own, you don't have to re-position them.



Choose a safe place

Babies need a firm, flat, uncluttered surface for sleeping to reduce the risks of SIDS, being trapped, or smothering.

The safest place is a crib, cradle, or bassinet that meets Canadian government safety standards and is put together and used according to manufacturer's instructions. Crib, cradle, and bassinet standards can be found at: www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps

A **safe crib** (cradle or bassinet) is in good condition and has

- a firm, flat mattress no more than 15 cm (6 inches) thick for a crib, or 3.8 cm (1.5 inches) thick for a cradle or bassinet; has no rips or tears, and fits snugly into the frame
- a tight-fitting bottom sheet
- slats that are no more than 6 cm (2³/₈ inches) apart
- a sticker saying it was made after September 1986
- no pillows; no bumper pads; no plastic mattress covers; no heavy blankets, quilts or sheepskins; no toys or stuffed animals; no positioning devices (e.g., wedges or rolls)

Cradles and bassinets have weight limits. Be sure to follow manufacturer's guidelines.

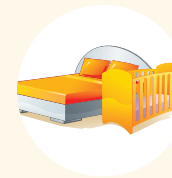
Car seats are meant for keeping babies safe during travel. They are not meant for long periods of sleep. When you get to where you are going, take baby out of the seat for sleep.



Keep baby warm, not hot

Babies are safest when the room temperature is comfortable for adults wearing light clothing. Overheating increases the risk of SIDS.

If your home is cold, choose a warmer sleeper for your baby. If using a blanket, make sure it is light-weight, firmly tucked under the end of the mattress, and reaches only to your baby's chest.



Make baby your roommate

Room-sharing means you sleep in the same room as your baby, but your baby is in his or her own crib, cradle, or bassinet. Room-sharing helps protect your baby from SIDS.

Room-sharing keeps your baby close without the risks of bed-sharing. When you are in the same room, it is easier to learn and respond to your baby's cues. This helps keep your baby safe, and builds a strong bond between you and your baby.

Alberta Health Services, the Canadian Paediatric Society, and Public Health Agency of Canada recommend room-sharing until your baby is at least 6 months old.



Tummy Time Tip: To help your baby's development and prevent flat areas on baby's head, give your baby time on his or her tummy several times every day when your baby is awake and with you. Remember, tummy to play, back to sleep.



Clear the air

Babies whose mothers smoke during pregnancy are at much greater risk of SIDS. Exposure to second-hand smoke both before after birth also increases risk.

Help your baby be healthy by being smoke-free and avoiding second-hand smoke before and after birth. Make sure no one smokes around your baby, at home, during travel or with other caregivers.

If you smoke, consider quitting or cutting back to quit. You and your baby will both benefit.

For help to quit smoking, visit www.albertaquits.ca or call toll-free: 1-866-710-QUIT



Breastfeeding helps

Breastfeeding helps protect your baby from illness and helps prevent SIDS.

Room-sharing makes breastfeeding easier, especially at night. Babies brought into bed for feeding are safer when put back in a crib to sleep before you go to sleep.

Young babies need to feed often throughout the day and night. When your baby is sleeping during the day, take time for yourself so you don't get over-tired.