

Safe Sleep

for Your Baby



Please take a few minutes
to read this important information
on safe sleep practices.



Public Health
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Canada



Please share this information with all family, friends, and other child care providers who may care for your baby to ensure they follow safe sleep practices.

This publication was developed by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Safe Sleep for Your Baby is available on Internet at the following address:
<http://www.publichealth.gc.ca/safesleep>

Également disponible en français sous le titre :
Sommeil sécuritaire pour votre bébé

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Space for local health care centre or professionals' contact information:



Creating a **Safe Sleep Environment** for your baby will help him or her sleep safely and reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Here are Four Steps that you can take to help create a Safe Sleep Environment for your baby:



Provide a **smoke free environment** – both before and after birth.



Always place your baby on his or her **back to sleep** – night time and nap time.



Place your baby to sleep in a **crib next to the adult's bed** for first 6 months.



Provide a **safe crib environment** that has no toys or loose bedding (use only a fitted sheet).



Smoke Free Environment

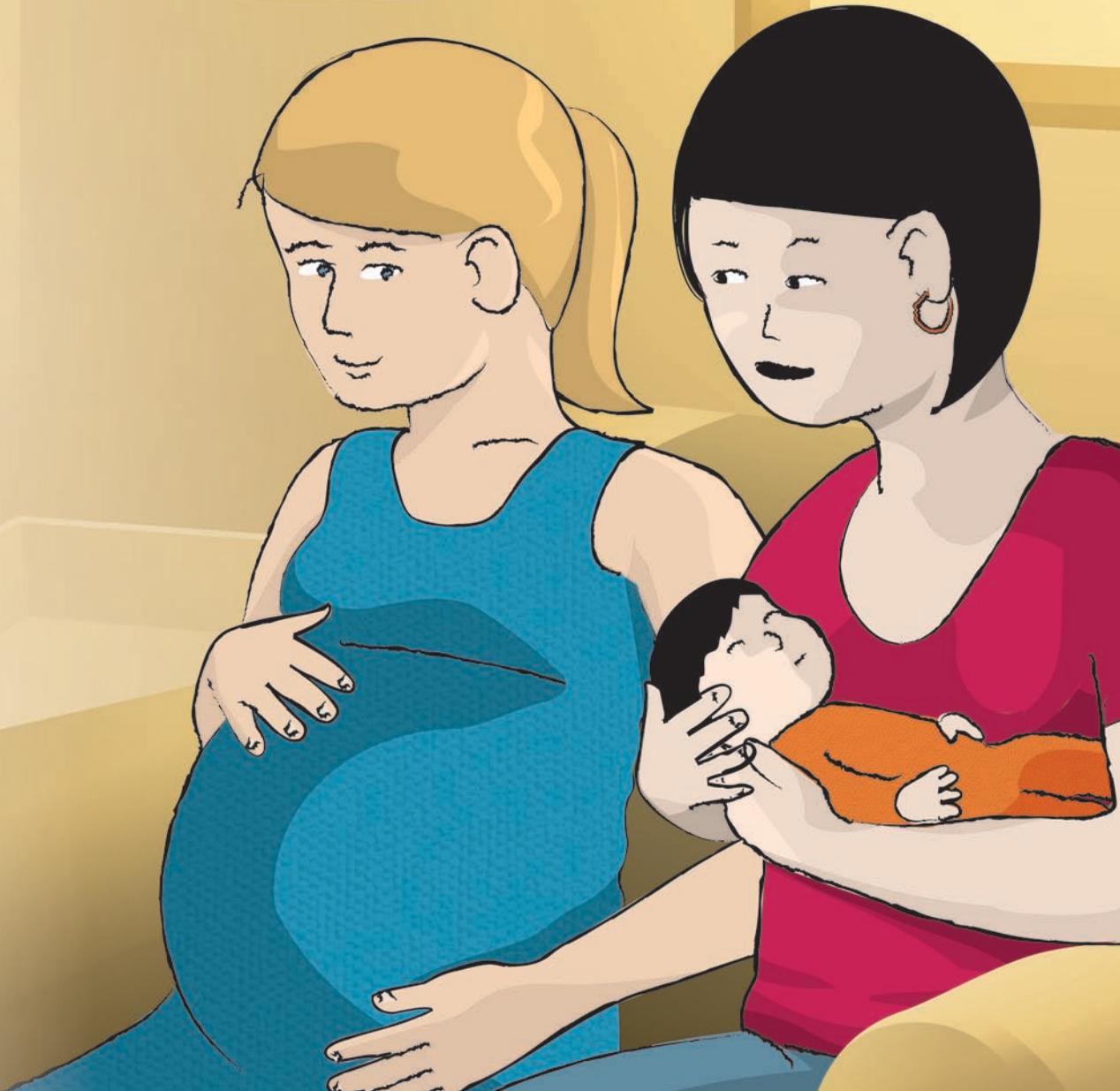
Before and After Birth

Studies show that exposure to smoke is a health risk for your baby both before and after birth and it has been identified as one of the greatest risk factors for SIDS.

Do not let anyone smoke near you when you are pregnant.

Do not let anyone smoke near your baby once he or she is born – not in the house, the car or anywhere your baby sleeps or spends time. If you, your partner, family member or friends smoke, smoke outside and well away from your baby.

Choose a non-smoking caregiver for your baby. If your baby leaves your home for childcare, make sure that the facility is always smoke-free, even when your baby is not there.





Back to Sleep

Night Time and Nap Time

Babies who sleep on their back have a reduced risk of SIDS. Since the launch of the Back to Sleep campaign in Canada in 1999, the number of babies placed to sleep on their back has increased dramatically, and the rate of SIDS has dropped by more than 50 percent.

Newborn babies tend to get in the habit of sleeping the way they are first placed, so start putting your baby on his or her back right from birth. Sleep positioners or rolled up blankets present a risk of suffocation and are not needed to help your baby sleep on his or her back.

Reminder:

Supervised tummy time during play time is also important to your baby's healthy muscle development.



Why every sleep?

A baby who usually sleeps on his or her back but is then placed on its stomach to sleep is at a much higher risk of SIDS. For this reason, it is important for everyone who cares for your baby, such as babysitters and grandparents, to also use the back to sleep position for your baby.

As your baby gets older, he or she will be able to turn over onto his or her stomach by themselves, usually at about 5 months. When this happens, you do not have to reposition your baby.





Crib Next to the Adult's Bed

Research has shown that *room sharing* is associated with a reduced risk of SIDS, and is recommended until your baby is at least six months old. Room sharing means placing your baby to sleep in a crib within arm's reach of where you sleep. This may mean putting your baby's crib next to your bed in your room, or putting a mattress next to his or her crib in your baby's room.

If your room is too small for a crib, use a cradle that meets current Canadian safety regulations. Move your baby to a crib once they reach the maximum weight that is set by the manufacturer or your baby can sit up by themselves, whichever comes first.

Co-sleeper products are **not** recommended by Health Canada. These products present a risk of suffocation and entrapment. Instead use a crib or cradle next to your bed.



Bed sharing has been identified as a risk factor for SIDS and can also lead to suffocation. Bed sharing or co-sleeping is when you share the same sleep surface as your baby, whether it is a bed, couch, futon, beanbag, recliner, armchair, air mattress, memory foam, or any makeshift bed.



Bed sharing is unsafe because a baby can suffocate if:

- he or she becomes trapped between the sleeping surface and the body of a parent or caregiver, the wall or other objects;
- the parent, caregiver or another child rolls over onto the baby; or
- the parent uses soft bedding material such as pillows or comforters.

The risk of death is even higher for your baby if the person sharing the same sleep surface with him or her is a smoker, very tired, or under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or medications that makes them sleepy.

Room sharing is a safe alternative to bed sharing.



Safe Crib Environment

The safest place for your baby to sleep or nap is in a crib. Do not let your baby sleep on an adult bed, couch or any soft surface (either alone or with another person). Soft surfaces increase the risk of suffocation.

Use a crib that has no toys or loose bedding.

- Anything extra in the crib can increase the risk of injury and suffocation.
- Other than a firm mattress and a fitted sheet, there is no need for any extra items in the crib – no toys, no blankets, no pillows, no rolled towels, and no bumper pads.
- Instead of a blanket, use light sleeping clothing for your baby, such as a one-piece sleeper. Blankets can be dangerous if your baby's head becomes covered when he or she is asleep.

Use a crib that meets current Canadian safety regulations.

- Only use a crib that has a label or sticker with a date of manufacture after September 1986.
- Check regularly to ensure that the crib's hardware is securely fastened and not damaged.

- The mattress supplied with the crib should be no thicker than 15 cm (6 in) and must fit snugly.
- Place the crib away from windows, curtains, blind cords, lamps, electrical plugs, extension cords, and out of reach of small objects.
- To learn more about crib and product safety visit: www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps

Be aware of room temperature.

- Overheating can be a risk for SIDS.
- Your baby should be lightly clothed for sleep, and the bedroom temperature should be kept comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- If the room temperature is comfortable for you, then it is also comfortable for your baby.

Reminder:

Putting the crib next to your bed makes it easier to breastfeed at night. Some research has shown that breastfeeding reduces the risk of SIDS.





The safest way for your baby to sleep is always on his or her back, in the crib, next to your bed.

Additional information and resources on SIDS and Safe Sleep Practices:

The Public Health Agency of Canada

www.publichealth.gc.ca/safesleep



The Canadian Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths (CFSID)

Toll Free: 1 800 363 7437

Email: sidsinfo@sidscanada.org

Website: www.sidscanada.org

Certified Safe Sleep Childcare Provider Online Course:

www.sidscanada.org/course.html