

Video: Essential tips to ensure safe sleep for infants

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Credit: Masood Aslami from Pexels

The risk for sudden infant death syndrome, or SIDS, is highest in the first year of life. SIDS often happens during sleep, which is why knowing and practicing safe sleep is so important.

In this Mayo Clinic Minute, Dr. Angela Mattke, a pediatrician with Mayo Clinic's Children's Center, discusses the most current safe sleep recommendations.

Sleep can be a big challenge for parents with infants.

"I think as parents, we're all desperate to get our children to sleep at night," says Dr. Mattke, who warns parents to be aware of products that are not safe for sleep.

"There's lots of different products that are marketed towards families and [parents](#) to help guarantee to improve their sleep. But most of those products have been shown to not be safe for infants to be sleeping in specifically anything that has an incline," says Dr. Mattke.

Other products, like loungers and weighted blankets, also are not safe for sleep.

Dr. Mattke says, when it comes to baby's sleeping space, keep it simple.

"Make sure the infant is sleeping on their back with no fluffy stuff around them. They should be the cutest thing in their bassinet in their crib," she says.

Sharing a bedroom with baby, especially for the first six months of life, can decrease the risk of sleep-related death by up to 50%. But the key is sharing a bedroom, not a bed.

"We want them sleeping in their own flat, safe sleeping environment with no fluffy blankets or things that could get in the way and risk their breathing," says Dr. Mattke.

American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations on creating a safe

sleep environment include:

- Place infants on their backs for sleep in their own sleep space with no other people.
- Use a crib, bassinet or portable play yard with a firm, flat mattress and a fitted sheet. Avoid sleep on a couch, armchair or in a seating device, like a swing or car safety seat (except while riding in the car).
- Keep loose blankets, pillows, stuffed toys, bumpers and other soft items out of the [sleep](#) space.
- Breastfeed if possible and avoid smoking.

Other recommendations include:

- Offer a pacifier at naptime and bedtime.
- Do not use home monitors or commercial devices, including wedges or positioners, marketed to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Infants should receive all recommended vaccinations.
- Supervised, awake tummy time is recommended daily to facilitate development.

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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