

HEALTHY AND SAFE SLEEP TIPS FOR INFANTS 0-12 MONTHS

Did you know?

#	Theme	Title
1	The safest place for an infant to sleep	Did you know that the safest place for an infant to sleep is in a crib, cradle, or bassinet?

The safest place for infants to sleep is in a crib, cradle, or bassinet that meets current Canadian regulations.

- ◆ Place your infant to sleep on a separate sleep surface, in an age appropriate crib, cradle or bassinet that meets current Canadian safety regulations.
- ◆ Share the same bedroom with your infant for at least the first 6 months of life. Place the crib, cradle or bassinet next to your bed.
- ◆ Right from birth, always place babies on their back to sleep, at nap time and night time.
- ◆ Provide a sleep surface that is firm and flat.
- ◆ Remove pillows, comforters, quilts, stuffed animals, bumper pads, positional devices or other loose or soft bedding materials that could suffocate or smother an infant.
- ◆ Dress your infant in a comfortable, fitted, one-piece sleepwear.
- ◆ Ensure that the room temperature is comfortable for everyone.
- ◆ Baby seats, swings, car seats, bouncers, strollers, slings and playpens are not safe substitutes for a crib.

Links:

- ◆ **Health Canada – Is Your Child Safe? Series**
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/index-eng.php
- ◆ **Public Health Agency of Canada: Safe Sleep** www.publichealth.gc.ca/safesleep
- ◆ **Canadian Paediatric Society: Caring for Kids**
www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/safe_sleep_for_babies
- ◆ **Baby's Breath** www.babysbreathcanada.ca/
- ◆ **Local public health unit**
www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx

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Did you know?

#	Theme	Title
2	Attachment and sleep	Did you know that your infant needs your loving care to better develop healthy sleep habits?

A secure attachment with a parent or caregiver is important for promoting healthy sleep habits. It helps infants feel secure and comfortable. Your infant will learn to settle and fall asleep by himself.

- ◆ Respond to your infant's cues day and night. Learn the cues that mean your infant is tired e.g., yawns, loses interest, quiets down, whines more, rubs eyes, etc.
- ◆ Comfort your crying infant. It will not spoil your baby! Responding affectionately will help your baby learn that you will be there when needed. It helps your infant feel more secure and comfortable.
- ◆ If your infant is crying or fussing you can speak, sing or stroke his forehead. Your presence may be sufficient to help your infant fall asleep. This will help your infant to learn how to self-soothe and fall back to sleep on his own.
- ◆ Help your infant feel secure by:
 - Comforting and holding your infant, especially when sick, hurt or upset.
 - Being there when your infant is sad, lonely or frightened.
 - Sharing smiles and showing you care when your infant needs comforting.
 - Talking to your infant often in a soothing voice, so your baby can easily recognize your voice when upset.
 - Letting your infant know you will be there when needed. It will give your infant the confidence to explore and learn.
 - Being consistent. Infants need to know that they can expect the same thing every time from you.
- ◆ Have realistic expectations. Not all infants are alike.

Links:

- ◆ **Canadian Paediatric Society – Healthy Sleep for Your Baby and Child**
www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/healthy_sleep_for_your_baby_and_child
- ◆ **FRP Canada – Family Routines**
www.welcomehere.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewpage&pageid=673
- ◆ **Best Start Resource Centre – My Child and I – Attachment for Life**
www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy_chld_dev/parent_attachment/parent_attachment_eng_Oct2012.pdf
- ◆ **Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development Strategic Knowledge Cluster on Early Child Development** www.child-encyclopedia.com/attachment/resources
- ◆ **TVO Parents – The Importance of Attachment**
tvoparents.tv.org/video/172267/importance-attachment
- ◆ **Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development – Temperament**
www.child-encyclopedia.com/en-ca/child-temperament/how-important-is-it.html

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Did you know?

#	Theme	Title
3	Establishing routines	Did you know that routines are important to help infants sleep well?

Infants thrive on routines. They function best when they know what to expect and when to expect it. Develop a healthy routine starting from birth.

- ◆ Aim for a flexible feeding and sleeping routine based on the needs of your infant.
- ◆ Find a routine which works for all members of your family. Make sure individual differences and needs are taken into consideration.
- ◆ Establish a brief routine before bedtime and nap time. Your infant will learn to associate the bedtime and nap routine with going to sleep. Choose a couple of activities like breastfeeding, bathing, telling a story, singing, massaging, etc. The routine should be enjoyable for all.
- ◆ Be prepared to change the routine if it is not working. For example, an infant can change his sleep routine due to: illness, teething, growth spurts, travelling, house guests, etc. Re-establishing a routine can take up to a week or two.
- ◆ Be patient and consistent when reinforcing a sleep routine and responding to your infant's cues.
- ◆ Try to keep a regular sleep schedule. Although every infant is different, on average:
 - Newborns need 14 to 18 hours of sleep per 24 hours
 - 2-6 month old infants need on average 14-16 hours of sleep per 24 hours
 - 6-11 month old infants need on average 11-14 hours of sleep per 24 hours
 - 12 month old infants need on average 10-13 hours of sleep per 24 hours
- ◆ Know that there is no routine that will guarantee that your infant will fall asleep or stay asleep longer.

Links:

- ◆ **Canadian Paediatric Society – Healthy Sleep for Your Baby and Child**
www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/healthy_sleep_for_your_baby_and_child
- ◆ **FRP Canada – Family Routines**
www.welcomehere.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewpage&pageid=673

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Did you know?

#	Theme	Title
4	Creating safe sleep environments	Did you know that creating safe sleep environments will reduce the risks of infant death?

Infants need to be in safe environments at all times. Always create safe sleep environments for your infant.

- ◆ Share the same room with your infant for at least the first 6 months of life. Place the crib, cradle or bassinet next to your bed.
- ◆ Right from birth always place babies on their back to sleep, at nap time and night time.
- ◆ Provide a sleep surface that is firm and flat.
- ◆ Ensure that your baby equipment meets current Health Canada consumer product safety standards.
- ◆ Remove pillows, comforters, quilts, stuffed animals, bumper pads, positional devices or other loose or soft bedding materials that could suffocate or smother an infant.
- ◆ Ensure that all ropes and cords are out of reach of infants e.g., curtain or window blind cords, electrical cords, strings on clothing, etc.
- ◆ Keep small items out of reach of infants. Do not allow your infant to put such items in their mouth.
- ◆ Baby carriers, car seats, bouncers, slings, strollers, wings and playpens are not a safe place for an infant to sleep.
- ◆ Car seats or any other devices that keep the infant seated or in a semi-reclined position are not made for unsupervised sleep. Sleeping in a sitting position can cause your baby's head to fall forward which can make it hard for your baby to breathe.
- ◆ It is important that your infant is not too hot during sleep. Overheating is a risk factor for SIDS. Dress your infant in a fitted one-piece sleepwear and to set the room temperature so it is comfortable for you. If you choose to use a sleep sack, follow the manufacturer recommendations and choose the correct size. You want to avoid the risk of your infant's head slipping into the sack.
- ◆ Take precautions if you give a pacifier to your infant.
 - Do not tie the pacifier ribbon or cord to the infant's clothing. The ribbon or cord can get wrapped around the infant's neck and can cause a strangulation hazard.
 - Inspect the pacifier frequently and throw it away when it starts to wear out.
 - Keep pacifiers clean. They can be a source of infection when they come in contact with different surfaces.
- ◆ Take precautions if you choose to swaddle your infant.
 - Follow your infant's cues and don't wrap if your infant resists.
 - Use a lightweight blanket and dress your infant in a light sleeper or onesie to avoid overheating.
 - When you swaddle your infant ensure he can flex his legs and that his head is uncovered.
 - Place infants on their back to sleep in their crib, cradle or bassinet.
 - Stop swaddling by age 2 months, before your infant starts to try to roll.
 - Talk to health care provider about swaddling your infant.

Links:

- ◆ **Public Health Agency of Canada: Safe Sleep** www.publichealth.gc.ca/safesleep
- ◆ **Canadian Paediatric Society: Caring for Kids** www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/safe_sleep_for_babies
- ◆ **Baby's Breath** www.babysbreathcanada.ca/
- ◆ **Health Canada – Is Your Child Safe? Sleep Time** www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/child-enfant/sleep-coucher-eng.php
 - Cribs, Cradles and Bassinets Regulations www.laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2010-261/
 - Regional Product Safety Office www.hc-sc.gc.ca/contact/cps-spc/hecs-dgsesc/pso-bsp-eng.php
- ◆ **Local public health unit** www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx

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Did you know?

#	Theme	Title
5	Breastfeeding and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)	Did you know that breastfeeding reduces the risks of SIDS?

Any amount of breastfeeding, for any duration, provides a protective effect against SIDS.

- ◆ Breastfeed your infant. Any amount of breastfeeding for any duration provides a protective effect against SIDS. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months offers greater protection.
- ◆ You can choose to breastfeed your infant where you sleep. This can make breastfeeding easier and help you respond faster to your infant's cues for feeding and comfort.
- ◆ When you are ready to go to sleep, return your infant to his crib, cradle, or bassinet. It is the safest place for your infant.
- ◆ Continue breastfeeding even if you smoke. It is best to smoke after breastfeeding. This will reduce the amount of nicotine in the breastmilk for the next feed.

Links:

- ◆ **Best Start Resource Centre**
 - **Breastfeeding Matters: An important guide to breastfeeding for women and their families** www.beststart.org/resources/breastfeeding
 - **Breastfeeding for the Health and Future of Our Nation** www.beststart.org/resources/aboriginal_health.html
- ◆ **Bilingual Online Ontario Breastfeeding Services directory** www.ontariobreastfeeds.ca
- ◆ **La Leche League Canada** www.lllc.ca

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Did you know?

#	Theme	Title
6	Alcohol/drug misuse and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)	Did you know that avoiding alcohol and drug misuse can reduce the risk of infant death?

Alcohol and drug misuse is a risk factor for SIDS and unexpected infant death.

- ◆ Alcohol and drug use during pregnancy is a risk factor for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- ◆ Consumption of alcohol and other substances by parents and caregivers poses a risk for infant death and other unintentional injuries in infants.
- ◆ Ask your partner or someone you trust to care for your infant until you are completely sober and not under the influence of substances.
- ◆ Choose alcohol-free drinks and abstain from substance use.

Links:

- ◆ **Best Start Resource Centre** www.beststart.org/resources/alc_reduction
 - **Be Safe: Have an Alcohol-free Pregnancy**
 - **Mixing Alcohol and Breastfeeding**
 - **Mocktails for Mom**
 - **Prescription Drug Misuse in Pregnancy and Parenting**
www.beststart.org/resources/aboriginal_health.html
- ◆ **Motherisk** www.motherisk.ca
- ◆ **Drug and Alcohol Helpline** www.drugandalcoholhelpline.ca

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Did you know?

#	Theme	Title
7	Smoking and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)	Did you know that preventing exposure to tobacco smoke, during pregnancy or after pregnancy, reduces the risk of SIDS?

Preventing exposure to tobacco smoke during pregnancy and after birth reduces the risk of SIDS.

- ◆ Smoking during pregnancy is one of the greatest risks for SIDS. No smoking at all is best for your baby but decreasing the number of cigarettes you smoke can also lower the risk of SIDS.
- ◆ Second-hand smoke also increases the risk of SIDS after your baby is born. Avoid smoking near your baby – in the house, in the car or anywhere your baby sleeps or spends time. If you, your partner, family members or friends choose to smoke, smoke outside and away from your baby.
- ◆ It is best to stop smoking before pregnancy. Stopping or cutting back at any time will make a difference.
- ◆ Ask visitors, your partner and other family members to smoke outside. Clearly identify your home and vehicle as smoke-free. Meet with family and friends in smoke-free public places.
- ◆ Continue breastfeeding even if you smoke. It is best to smoke after breastfeeding. This will reduce the amount of nicotine in the breastmilk for the next feed.

Links:

- ◆ **Canadian Lung Association – Smoking & tobacco**
www.lung.ca/protect-protegez/tobacco-tabagisme_e.php
- ◆ **Prevention of Gestational and Neonatal Exposure to Tobacco Smoke (PREGNETS)**
www.pregnets.org/
- ◆ **Smokers Helpline** www.smokershelpline.ca
- ◆ **Motherisk** www.motherisk.ca
- ◆ **Local public health unit**
www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx