MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH NEWSLETTER





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Brought to you by the Nutaqqavut Health Information System (NHIS) and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)



SUPPORT MOTHERS AND FAMILIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

During prenatal and well-baby visits, ask about the sleep plan for the baby. Discuss the importance of sleep environment, tobacco smoke exposure, and breastfeeding. Instruct mothers on how to prepare a safe place for baby to sleep.

Advise that infants be placed on their backs for <u>every</u> sleep by every caregiver until 1 year of age . Once infants are able to

roll from their back to their stomach, and their stomach to their back (usually at 5 to 6 months of age), it is not necessary to reposition them onto their backs during sleep.

Infants should always be in a smoke -free environment . Prenatal and postnatal tobacco smoke exposure

increases the risk

of SIDS. Prenatal



tobacco smoke exposure is also associated with reduced lung function in infants. Encourage pregnant mothers to quit smoking or reduce the amount of smoking during pregnancy to less than 10 cigarettes per day. Quitting offers the best protection against SIDS.

Infant overheating should be avoided . Heavy blankets, warm room temperatures, and heavy or multiple layers of clothing increase the risk of SIDS.

Infants should be placed to sleep on a flat, firm surface . Loose bedding or soft items like pillows, bumper pads, duvets, quilts, and stuffed animals increase the risk of suffocation. Whenever possible , engage family members in conversations about sleep practices and tobacco smoke exposure .

Research suggests that any breastfeeding may have a protective effect for SIDS . Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months may reduce the risk SIDS by up to 50%.

Preterm infants are at increased risk for

SIDS. Preterm infants should be transitioned to supine (back) sleep position before being discharged from the hospital. Ensure that families understand that once discharged home, preterm infants should always be placed to sleep on their backs.

Although bed-sharing is not recommended, inform parents/caregivers about ways they can reduce risk when sharing, which includes:

- Always placing baby to sleep on his or her back.
- Never bed-sharing with someone who smokes or has consumed alcohol or drugs that decrease arousal.
- Sleeping on a firm surface so that baby GRHVQ¶WUROO
- KHHSLQJ EDE\¶V frombul Holose IUHH bedding, pillows and areas where baby can become trapped (i.e. between wall and mattress).
- Never bed-sharing with non-caregivers or children.
- Never placing baby to sleep on a sofa, armchair, or other soft surface, either alone or with an adult or children.

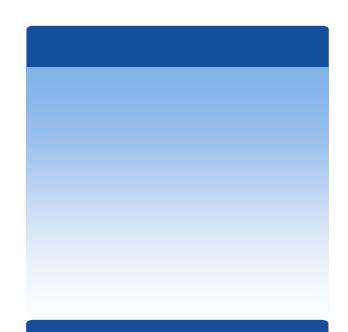
To reduce SIDS, the safest place for an infant to sleep is on their backs, alone, on a firm surface with no loose bedding present and with a caregiver in the same room.

Work with mothers and families to help create the safest sleep environment possible, at home, travelling, and while out on the land .





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