

Other important things to remember

A crying baby can test the patience of even the most loving grandparent. Learn how to safely soothe a crying baby at www.babycries.org.

The back of your grandbaby's head is soft until the age of about four months. You can avoid flat spots on baby's head by

- limiting the amount of awake time that the back of baby's head is resting against a solid object such as a car seat, carrier or bouncer.
- giving him or her lots of "tummy time" when baby is awake and someone is watching baby. While lying on the tummy (stomach), baby can play and also strengthen his or her neck, shoulders and arms.
- placing the baby's feet so they touch the top of the sleep area one week and the bottom of the sleep area the next week.



*Details about safe cribs can be found on the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) website.

www.cpsc.gov/en/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/cribs/

Please visit the DHS Safe Sleep webpage at www.allegheycounty.us/dhs/safesleep for Related Resources

DHS IS responsible for providing and administering publicly funded services to Allegheny County residents.

DHS PRINCIPLES

All services will be

- high quality, comprehensive, and accessible.
- individualized and designed to be respectful of the unique cultural characteristics of each individual and/or community
- integrated and offered through a team approach that recognizes the capacity of individuals and families to identify their own strengths, needs, and goals; create relationships with natural supports; and take steps necessary to accomplish these goals.



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DHS funding information is available at www.allegheycounty.us/dhs/funding.aspx
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safe
sleep

FOR YOUR GRANDBABY



Important tips

to make sleep time
a safe time

safe sleep

You've waited and waited for your grandbaby's arrival. Now you and all baby's caregivers want to keep baby healthy and safe while baby is awake and asleep.

As the grandparent, you have a special role to play in the safety of your new grandbaby. In addition to following Safe Sleep for Infants guidelines yourself, talk to baby's parents and other caregivers about the importance of everyone following them. It's the best way to keep your grandbaby safe during sleep time.

First of all, make sure whoever cares for baby is prepared to stay alert and be able to meet baby's needs. This can be impossible if a caregiver is under the influence of anything that causes drowsiness or confusion like drugs, legal or not, or alcohol.

Next, remind them of the importance for baby to sleep alone, on their back and in an appropriate safe space clear of clutter. Unlike older children, babies cannot lift their heads to breathe or move from items that block their breathing. They cannot push an adult or older child away if they are being crushed. Blankets, bumper pads, stuffed animals, clothing, other people – even other children – are not appropriate for a baby's sleeping area.

Make sure everyone gives your grandbaby a safe, risk-free, all-their-own place to sleep.

Your grandbaby is at risk when put to sleep on soft surfaces or in a seated position. Instead:

- Use a crib that meets current CPSC* standards, with a tight-fitting, firm mattress covered by a crib-sized fitted sheet; or
- Use a bassinet, side sleeper or pack-and-play that contains only the mattress provided by the manufacturer.

 **Dangerous sleep areas include adult beds, car seats, strollers, swings, fabric slings, infant carriers, waterbeds, air mattresses, sofas or chair cushions and piles of blankets.**

Your grandbaby is at very high risk if not always placed on his or her back to sleep. Instead:

- Place baby on back to sleep every time – for naps and at night.

 **Baby is not more likely to choke when lying on his or her back. In fact, the choking risk might actually be lower when sleeping on the back.**

Your grandbaby is at risk if anyone who smokes, drinks alcohol or uses mind-altering drugs is given responsibility to care for baby. Instead:

- Agree to refrain from smoking, alcohol or drug use while caring for baby.
- Have a strict NO-smoking rule for anyone who enters the home, car or vicinity of baby

 **Baby is at particularly high risk when bed-sharing with a smoker, even when the adult does not smoke while in bed.**

Your grandbaby is at risk when sharing a bed with an adult or older child. Instead:

- Share your room, but not your bed, with your grandbaby.

 **Bringing your grandbaby's safe-sleep area into your room allows you to keep baby close so you know when baby needs something, while lowering the risk of accidental suffocation.**

Your grandbaby is at risk when covered by a blanket or a hat to keep warm. Instead:

- Use a one-piece sleeper (with feet, if needed).
- Always leave baby's head uncovered while sleeping.
- Snug upper body swaddling is safe as long as baby cannot roll over or undo the wrapping.

 **Dangerous warmers include blankets, loose-fitting sheets or pajamas with strings. Do not let baby overheat during sleep. If the room is comfortable for you, then it is comfortable for baby.**

Your grandbaby is at risk if other items are in the sleep area. Instead:

- Put nothing but baby in the sleep area.

 **Especially dangerous things to have in the sleep area include pillows, blankets, sheepskins or bumper pads as well as soft objects, such as stuffed toys.**