

Dear Grandparents-

I am writing to let you know that the recommendations for safe sleep have changed significantly in the last years, and I want to make sure you are up to date on the current safe sleep recommendations to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS or Crib Death). While I know that in different times, people were instructed to have infants sleep in different positions, we now know a lot more about SIDS prevention and I know that you want the best for your grandchildren. Please follow these recommendations when placing your grandchildren to sleep.

1. Please place the baby on his/her back to sleep EVERY time
2. Use a firm sleep surface- ideally a crib or bassinet, never a couch or chair (the couch is one of the most dangerous places for infants to sleep)
3. Ideally, the baby should sleep in the same room as the caregiver, but in his/her own crib/bassinet. Having the baby sleep in the same bed as the caregiver increases the risk of SIDS
4. Keep soft objects, pillows, and loose bedding, including blankets, away from the sleep area. Covering the face or head should always be avoided.
5. Consider offering a pacifier at naptime or bedtime
6. Avoid smoke exposure, as this increases the risk for SIDS
7. Babies should not be too warm at night: Generally, they should be dressed appropriately for the environment with no greater than one layer more than an adult would wear to be comfortable. If they are sweating or if their chest feels hot, that is too warm.

Frequently asked questions:

Q: What about sleeping on their side, this is what we always did?

A: You made the best decision for your infant based upon the information that you had at the time. Nobody is questioning your love for your grandchild or doubting your parenting or expertise. It's just that we have new information. We now know that infants that are placed to sleep on the side are two times more likely to die in their sleep compared to infants who sleep on their back.

Q: Can I put them on their stomach so he/she can sleep better?

A: No. Babies that are accustomed to sleeping on their back who are placed on their stomach to sleep have a high risk of SIDS (As much as a 40 times the risk of SIDS).

Q: I am worried the baby will be cold and I want to make sure he/she is warm...

A: There are some safe ways you can keep a baby warm. While we never want a baby to have a loose blanket, quilt, comforter or sheepskin in their bed, there are specially designed sleep sacks for babies. These keep the babies warm, but do not come loose or cover the head.

Q: What if the baby spits up, isn't it dangerous for them to be on their back if they spit up?

A: Thankfully, sleeping on the back does not increase the risk for choking or aspiration in infants, EVEN in those infants with reflux/spit up.

As a pediatrician, I want to thank you for taking the time to learn about the current safe sleep recommendations. If you would like more information, please learn more at [SIDSRisk.org](https://www.sidsrisk.org)