

# Infant Safe Sleep

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## Background

Sudden unexpected infant death (SUID) and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) take the lives of many infants each year. One preventable cause of SUID and SIDS is unsafe sleep practices. Research was conducted to review websites and other articles to find information regarding safe sleep guidelines, lack of knowledge and compliance, and interventions to combat those.

## Literature Review

Research for this project included 13 sources. These sources were websites that contribute health information to the public and peer reviewed articles from journals. Three sources were websites such as the Center for Disease Control and Prevention that share health knowledge with the public. Seven articles came from pediatric journals. Five research articles were used.

## Results: Sleep Surface

Infants should be placed to sleep on a hard mattress. Hard mattresses decrease the chance of the infant's head forming an indent. An indent places the infant at risk for rebreathing carbon dioxide and suffocating. There should be no loose blankets, stuffed animals, or other toys in the crib with the infant. Having these loose items increases the risk of suffocation and strangulation.

## Results: Sleep Position

Infants should be placed on their backs to sleep. If an infant sleeps in the prone position, this increases the chance of rebreathing to occur. Rebreathing is where an infant takes in too much CO<sub>2</sub> and not enough O<sub>2</sub>, leading to hypercapnia and hypoxia. Side lying should also be prevented, as there is risk that the infant can roll onto its stomach, leading to the same problems as if it was in the prone position.

## Results: Room Sharing

Bed-sharing is the dangerous practice of sleeping with an infant on the same surface, and it increases the risk of suffocation, strangulation, and entrapment. The alternative is room-sharing, which is when the infant sleeps on its own surface next to the parent's bed. Room-sharing decreases the risk of SIDS up to 50% (Moon, 2016). Room-sharing allows parents quick access to their infant for feeding, comforting, or overall monitoring without placing the infant at risk.



<https://www.todaysparent.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/BabyinCrib.jpg>

## Discussion

Infants should be placed to sleep on their backs, on a hard surface, in a crib with no other loose items, and alone with no other person. These guidelines are set by the American Academy of Pediatrics as they are shown to provide the infant the safest sleep environment. They are also shown to decrease the risk of SUID and SIDS.

## Nursing Implications

Nurses and other healthcare providers must take it into their own hands to make sure they are correctly educating patients on safe sleep, as it is shown that parents mimic what they are taught in the hospital setting. It is a responsibility of the nurse to equip parents with the knowledge they need to keep their infant safe at all times. Not only should these guidelines be taught, but the nurse must practice them at the hospital as well to illustrate the guidelines to the parents.



<https://www.dailyherald.com/entlife/20200222/keep-infants-safe-during-sleep>