

Back is Best for Safe Sleep

The safest way to place your baby for sleep is on their back.



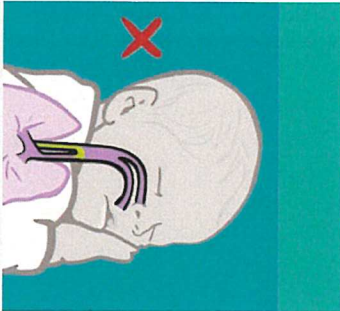
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SAFE SLEEP PROGRAM

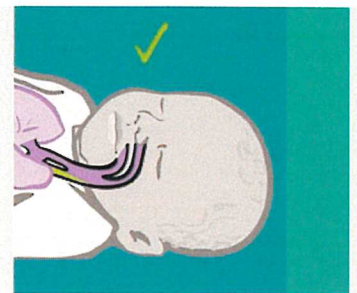
www.in.gov/health/safesleep/safe-sleep/

Some parents worry their baby will choke if they sleep on their back, but they're actually less likely to choke than if they are placed to sleep on their stomach. Here's why:



The Trouble with Tummy Sleep:

When a baby sleeps on their stomach, their food tube (esophagus) is on top of their air tube (trachea), so any food or fluid they spit up could pool at the opening of their trachea, making it possible for them to aspirate or choke.



Back Sleep = Easy Breathing:

When a baby sleeps on their back, their air tube (trachea) is on top of their food tube (esophagus). If a baby spits up while on their back, the food and fluid will run back into their stomach and not into their lungs.

What About Side Sleeping?

No, not safe. A baby that's placed on their side to sleep is more likely to roll onto their stomach, putting them at risk for SIDS. In fact, some research suggests they may be at an even higher risk for SIDS than if they were only to sleep on their stomach. To reduce the risk of SIDS and choking, babies should be placed completely on their backs every time they sleep.

Back Sleep = Even with Reflux:

Even babies with reflux should sleep on their backs. Propping their head up or raising the crib or mattress won't help and can be dangerous because the baby might slide into a position that makes it hard to breathe. It's safest for babies to sleep on a firm, flat surface. If you're worried about your baby's sleep due to reflux or another condition, talk to your doctor.



Make Back Sleep a Habit

For nighttime sleep to naps, always place your baby on their back to sleep until their first birthday. It's one of most important things you can do to prevent choking and keep your little one safe as they sleep!

Additional Resources



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www.in.gov/health/safesleep/safe-sleep/

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