

A Message about SIDS Risk-reduction Practices in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

In these challenging times, newborns may be released to the care of others in cases where some degree of separation from parents ill with COVID-19 is needed. For infants who are able to go home with their families, social distancing of the family unit means that relatives or home visitors may not be able to provide relief and support to new and exhausted parents. Whether it is for the unexpected caregiver or the parent, it is still important that safe infant sleep guidelines be provided to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths.

Infants sleep safest when placed to sleep on their backs. Sleep is safest in cribs, bassinets or portable cribs that are free of pillows, blankets, bumpers and other loose and soft items. Should more warmth be needed, sleep clothing or what is termed a wearable blanket of the correct size can be used. There should be no exposure to tobacco smoke.

While room sharing with the parent and breastfeeding also are part of the guidelines to reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths, it is important to stay informed about the American Academy of Pediatrics and CDC guidance on these two practices in relation to COVID-19 and to discuss best practices with the mother's and infant's care givers.

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