Sleeping with Your Baby
Understanding the Risks

Some parents sleep with their babies purposely, and some may fall asleep with their babies accidentally. There are a number of reasons why parents might do this. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) states that **sleeping with your baby is not recommended.** However, certain situations make sleeping with your baby even more dangerous and could lead to death. **You should not sleep with your baby if...**

Your Baby...

- Was born more than 3 weeks early, or weighed less than 5lbs 8oz at birth
- Is less than 4 months old
- Was around tobacco smoke or vape during pregnancy

The Person Sleeping with Baby...

- Consumed alcohol, medicines, or drugs that make it harder to wake up, or is overly tired.
- Uses tobacco (smoke or vape)
- Is not the baby's parent

The Sleep Space...

- Has pillows, blankets, a pillow to prop up a baby, nursing pillow, or a very soft mattress
- Is a couch, recliner, or chair
- Includes other adults, children, and/or pets in the bed

If you said yes to any of these, it is strongly recommended that you **stop sleeping with your baby.**

*Turn over for **ideas** about how to sleep safer.*

Talk to your healthcare provider for more information and visit **SafeSleepNC.org**

Safe Sleep NORTH CAROLINA

Tips for Creating a **Safer Sleep Plan**

It is normal for babies to wake often at night, but it can be challenging.
Have a plan to make sleep safer when caring for your baby.



Share your room with baby, not your bed. Keep baby in your room close to your bed, but on a separate sleep surface designed for infants*. This will make it easier for you to feed, comfort, and watch your baby at night.



Keep baby safer during night-time care and feeding. If you bring baby into your bed for feeding, remove all soft items and bedding from the area. Put baby back in their own sleep space when finished. Bringing your baby into bed for nighttime feeding is recommended over a recliner, chair, or couch because of the increased risk of suffocation.



If you fall asleep while feeding or caring for your baby in your bed, place him or her back in the separate sleep area as soon as you wake up. **Consider setting a timer on your phone to wake you in case you fall asleep.**



Couches and armchairs can be very dangerous for baby. Be mindful of how tired you are, and avoid couches and armchairs for feeding or caring for baby if you think you might fall asleep.



Ask someone to stay with you while you're feeding or caring for baby to keep you awake or to place the baby into a safe sleep area if you fall asleep.
Or consider taking turns. This means that one caregiver cares for the baby, while the other gets time to sleep.

Remember! **ALL** Babies Should Sleep:



on their **back**



in a **smoke/vape free** space



on a **firm, flat surface**



with **NO** blankets, pillows (including nursing pillows), or other extra items near them

What are your thoughts about these tips?

What help do you need to make sleep safer for your baby?

*A crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard that follows the safety standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is recommended. For information on crib safety, contact the CPSC at 1-800-638-2772 or https://cpsc.gov/safesleep

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Safe Sleep Can be Hard. Your Baby is Worth It. **SafeSleepNC.org**