

The Dangers of Sharing a Bed With Your Baby

- Bed sharing or co-sleeping may be hazardous under certain conditions.* But if you consider it, please remember:
- Your baby should sleep:
 - On her/his back
 - On a firm mattress
 - With no heavy blankets, comforters or pillows that could cover her/his face or make them too hot.
 - On a mattress that fits tightly against the head board and at least two feet away from the wall because a baby can slip between the wall and bed and suffocate.
- Your baby should not be in the same bed with a sleeping adult who:
 - Is excessively tired or overweight
 - Is a smoker
 - Has used alcohol, drugs, or prescription or over-the-counter medications that cause drowsiness.
- Adults (other than the parents), children, or other siblings should avoid bed sharing with an infant.

Other Dangerous Situations to Avoid

- Your baby should never sleep on a waterbed, recliner, futon or sofa— with or without you. It is too easy for the baby to slip into a crack and suffocate.
- Your baby should never sleep in a bed with other children who can accidentally roll over on the baby while both are sleeping.
- Your baby should never sleep alone on an adult bed, since she/he can fall off or become trapped between the bed and the wall, frame or anything else you use to keep the baby from falling out of the bed. These are all high-risk situations for suffocation.

Remember, parents and babies should be close, but adult beds were not made with infant safety in mind.

- * It should be noted that the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is on record as opposing bed sharing by an infant and an adult, particularly if there is more than 1 adult in the bed.

Supporting Organizations

Alabama Child Death Review System
Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Alabama Perinatal Program
Alabama Network of Children's Advocacy Centers
Prevent Child Abuse Alabama
Corporate Foundation for Children
Voices for Alabama's Children



The Alabama Child Death Review System



For More Information:
ACDRS
1-334-206-2953 or
www.adph.org/cdr

ADPH-CDR-001-10-03-kw

Children for our Future...

Safety for Sleeping Babies



**Alabama Child
Death Review System**

Safety for Sleeping Babies

Decisions, Decisions... Where to Sleep?

- A crib that conforms to the safety standards of the *CPSC is the desired sleeping environment for your baby.
- You may choose to place your baby's crib in your bedroom.
- You may also choose to put the baby's crib in her/his room.
- Sometimes mothers who breastfeed fall



asleep with their baby in their bed. Some parents will choose to sleep with their baby in bed with them. Experts do not agree on the potential benefits of sharing a bed with your baby. Experts do agree, however,

that there are many factors that can make sharing a bed with your baby unsafe (see "The Dangers of Sharing a Bed With Your Baby").

* Consumer Product Safety Commission

Sleeping Position Safety Recommendations!

BACK TO SLEEP:

- Always place your baby on her/his back to sleep (unless you are instructed not to for other health reasons by your baby's doctor).
- Avoid putting your baby on his/her side or stomach because this increases the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- The use of special devices such as wedges and cushions when positioning your baby is NOT recommended.
- Remember to put your baby on her/his tummy ("tummy time") while awake and supervised.



Instructions For a Baby-Safe Bed.

Your baby's bed should have:

- Railings that are no more than 2 3/8 inches apart (you can't fit a soda can through them);
- A firm mattress that fits snugly in the frame;
- A fitted sheet that is tight around the mattress;
- No quilts, comforters, duvets, heavy blankets, stuffed animals, bumper pads, sheepskins, etc.

Also keep in mind:

- Make sure your baby's head and face remain uncovered during sleep.
- Do not let your baby get overheated.
- Keep the room temperature comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- Your baby should be in a one-piece sleeper with nothing over her/him.
- If it's cold, layer the baby's clothing (for example, add a tee-shirt and socks under their sleeper) and use only a light receiving blanket, if necessary.

Never smoke or allow anyone else to smoke in the car, house or anywhere else your baby will be!

Based on the Recommendations Provided by the American Academy of Pediatrics (March 2000)