

Safe Sleep For Your Baby



Keeping Your Baby Safe While Sleeping

An Educational Flip Chart
For Use by Healthcare
Providers

Developed by the:



The ABC's of Safe Sleep

- Babies should sleep:
 - **ALONE**
 - Not with adults, other children, or pets
 - Not with toys, stuffed animals, blankets
 - On their **BACK**
 - Not on their side
 - Not on their stomach
 - In a **CRIB** or bassinette
 - Not in the parent's bed or a sibling's bed
 - Not in a couch or chair
 - Not in a car seat or carrier



- In Tennessee, over 100 babies die every year from unsafe sleep practices. They suffocate because an adult rolls over on top of them or unsafe items in their crib like pillows, blankets, or stuffed animals smother them.
- You can protect your baby from these deaths. They are preventable.
- You might have heard about the “Back to Sleep” campaign to protect babies from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or SIDS. We’ve also learned more about other ways to keep babies safe and so now we are talking about the “ABC’s of Safe Sleep”: Babies should sleep **A**lone, on their **B**ack, and in a **C**rib.
- Here’s what the ABC’s mean:
 - **ALONE**: Babies should not sleep in a bed with you or anyone else. When you put them in their crib, there should not be any toys, stuffed animals, blankets, or bumper pads.
 - **BACK**: Babies should always be put to sleep on their backs, not on their side or stomach.
 - **CRIB**: Babies should always sleep in their own crib or bassinette. Don’t put the baby in the bed with you, or in a couch or chair, or a car seat, stroller, or bouncy chair.

The ABC's of Safe Sleep

- Babies should sleep:
 - **A**LONE
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 - Not with toys, stuffed animals, blankets
 - On their **B**ACK
 - Not on their side
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Unsafe and Potentially Deadly Sleep Scenarios



Potential responses to common parent concerns:

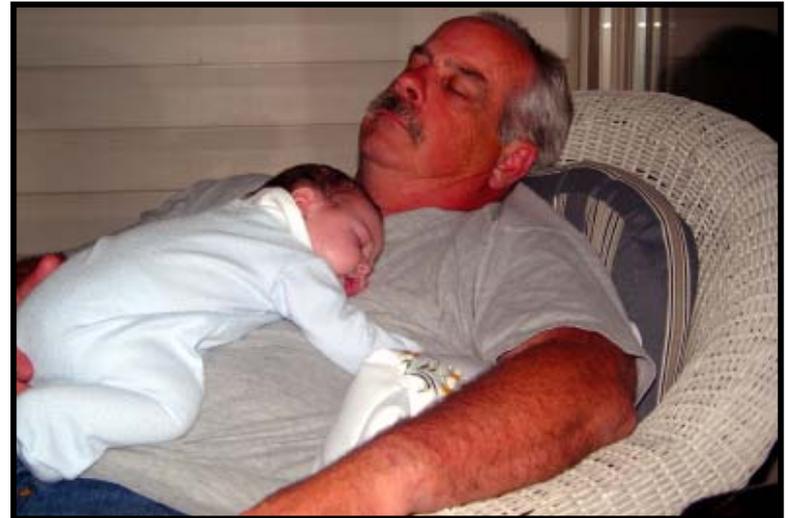
“Want to be vigilant/prevent SIDS”—this is impossible. These deaths are often silent, and you won’t “hear” your baby suffocating just because they are close to you. You make it more likely they will die if they are in the bed with you. Put them in a crib or bassinette next to your bed—that will put you close to them but also keep them safe from suffocation.

“Flat spots from laying on back”—Babies who lay on their back may develop a bit of a flat spot on the back of their head. There are several ways to make this less likely—when the baby is awake, give them tummy time—this helps develop their head and neck muscles. You can also alternate the direction in which the baby is placed in the crib to sleep (put their head at one end of the crib for one week, flip them around the next). If your baby does get a flat spot, these aren’t dangerous and usually go away in time.

“I did this with previous children and they turned out fine”—You were very lucky. This is like riding in your car without your seatbelt. You might not have a wreck on one trip, but you may have one on a future trip. You always want to be prepared—so you should always wear your seatbelt. The same is true with putting your baby to sleep alone, on its back, and in a crib. You never know when your baby could suffocate, so best to be safe every time.

- Look at these pictures. These are all unsafe ways for baby to sleep. These babies are at risk of dying. What is unsafe about these pictures? (*allow parent to answer*)
 - Upper left: Baby sleeping in bed with parents. Parents could roll over and suffocate baby.
 - Upper right: Baby on side and sleeping in crib with blankets and stuffed animals. Baby could roll over on its face into the mattress. Small babies don’t have strong enough muscles in their head or neck to be able to move their face if it becomes blocked. Also, the stuffed animal or blanket could block the baby’s face and smother them.
 - Lower left: The baby is sleeping on its stomach and her mouth and nose could become blocked by the mattress. Small babies don’t have strong enough muscles in their head or neck to be able to move their face if it becomes blocked.
 - Lower right: Baby sleeping on stomach and with adult. The adult is asleep—the baby could slip down between him and the chair and become strangled. Also the baby’s mouth or nose could be blocked while sleeping on his chest and the baby would not be able to breathe.

Unsafe and Potentially Deadly Sleep Scenarios



Safe Places for Baby to Sleep



- The pictures on this page shows different examples of safe places for babies to sleep.
- Notice that in each picture:
 - There is a firm mattress.
 - There are no blankets.
 - There are no stuffed animals or toys.
- Also notice that we don't have a picture of a baby sleeping in bed with his parents. That would be unsafe and would put the baby at risk for suffocating.
- Sometimes you might hear about products like co-sleeping devices or wedges or positioners that are supposed to keep your baby safe. There is no evidence that these devices or safe or that they prevent suffocation.

Safe Places for Baby to Sleep



UNSAFE Places for Baby to Sleep



- On the last page, we looked at pictures of safe places for your baby to sleep.
- This page has pictures of places that are **not safe** for your baby to sleep.
 - Air mattresses—Your baby should always be on a firm mattress in their crib or bassinette. Air mattresses are not firm and the baby’s face could become blocked, causing it to suffocate.
 - Car seat—You should always put your baby in the car seat anytime you are riding in the car. But when the baby is not in the car, don’t use the car seat as a place for baby to sleep. Babies tend to slide down and their heads push down on their necks—this can block their airway and they can suffocate. The same thing can happen in a bouncy chair or swing.
 - Sofas, couches, and chairs—There are lots of dangers here. The baby’s face could become pressed up against the side or back of the couch and they won’t be able to breathe. If another person is on the couch with them, they could become trapped between that person and the back or side of the couch. And as the baby gets older, they could roll off the couch. The same things could happen in a chair.

UNSAFE Places for Baby to Sleep



 Inflatable mattresses



 Car seat or carrier



 Bouncy chair or swing

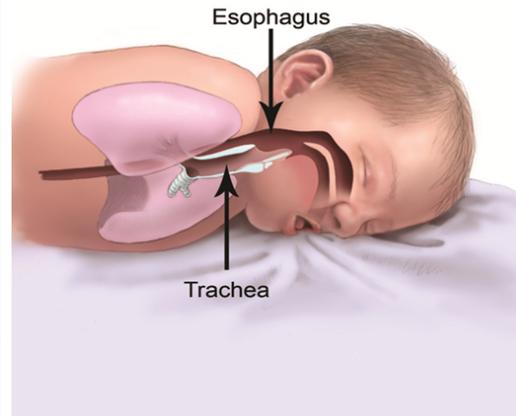


 Sofa or couch



 Chair

Sleep Position and Choking Risk



Baby on Stomach INCORRECT

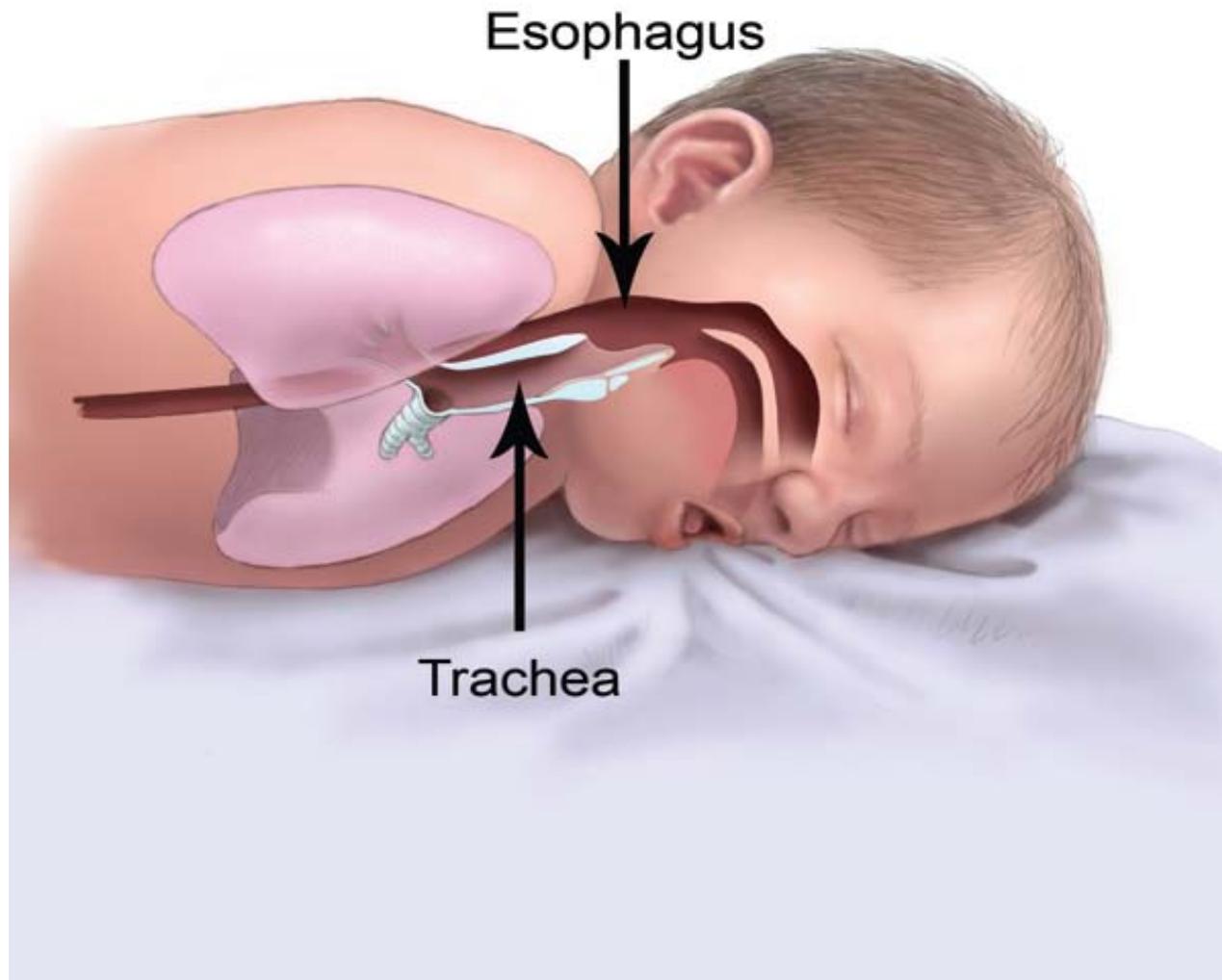
If this baby vomits or spits up, gravity might pull food down into the wind pipe (trachea), causing the baby to aspirate or choke.



Images courtesy of the Back to Sleep campaign; for educational purposes only; NICHD, NIH, DHHS; <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids>

- Some people worry that if they put their baby on its back, the baby might get choked if they spit up while sleeping. Actually, the baby has a greater chance of choking if they are on their stomach. Here's why:
- Look at this picture. The esophagus, or "food pipe," connects the baby's mouth and stomach. The trachea, or "wind pipe," connects the baby's nose and mouth with the lungs.
- When the baby is on its stomach, the food comes up the esophagus and gravity can easily pull it down into the trachea, blocking the airway and choking the baby.
- So putting the baby to sleep on its stomach actually makes it more likely to choke.

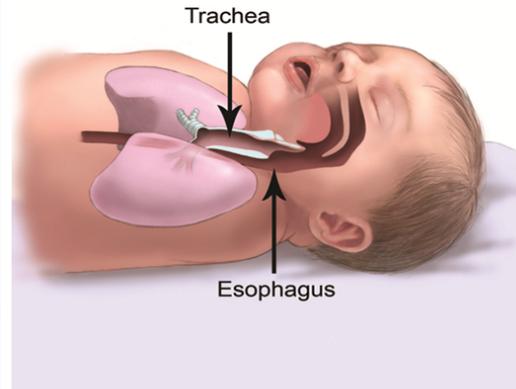
Sleep Position and Choking Risk



Baby on Stomach INCORRECT

If this baby vomits or spits up, gravity might pull food down into the wind pipe (trachea), causing the baby to aspirate or choke.

Sleep Position and Choking Risk



Baby on Back CORRECT

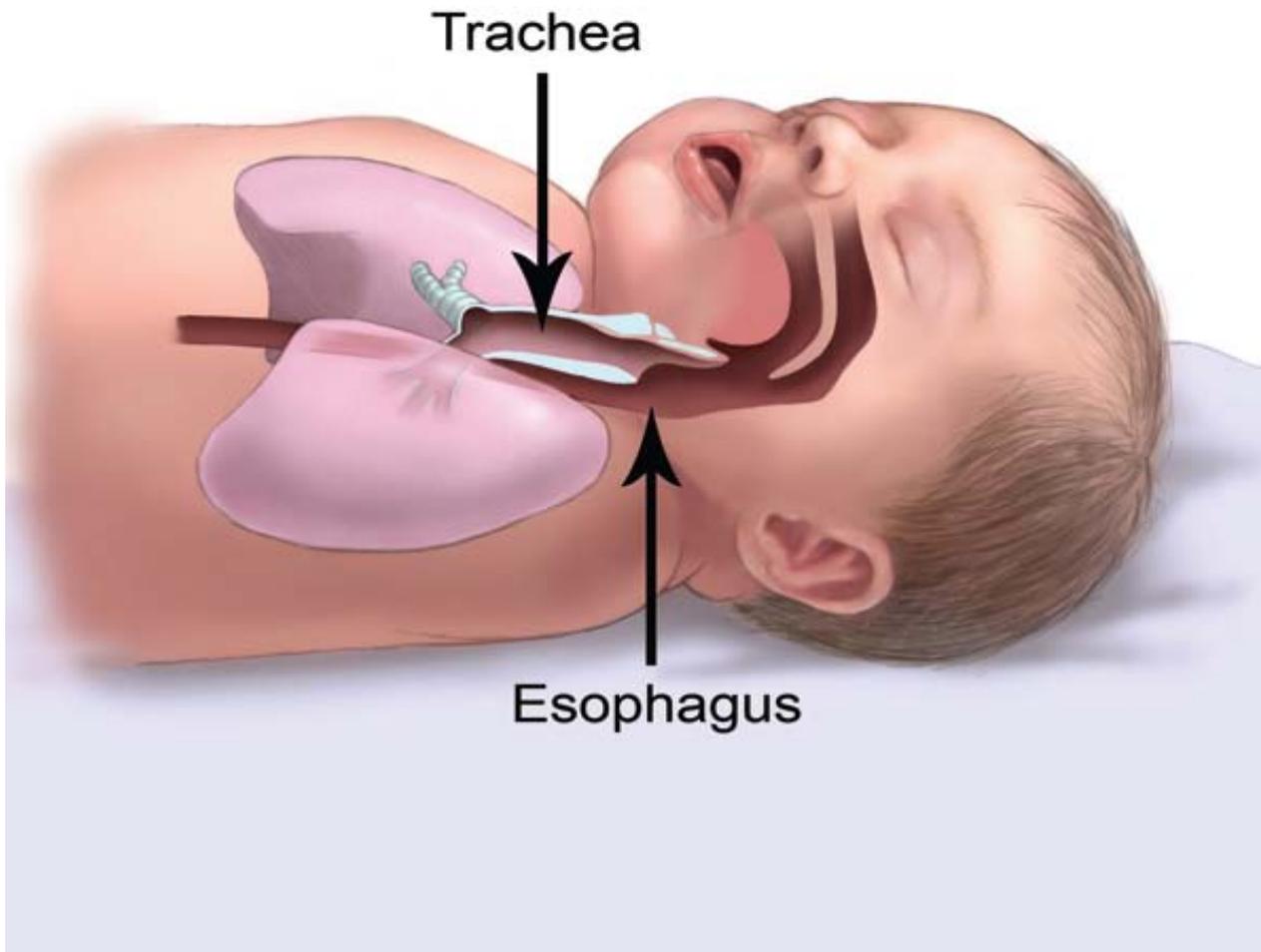
If this baby vomits or spits up, gravity might keep food from going into the wind pipe (trachea), making it less likely for the baby to aspirate or choke.



Images courtesy of the Back to Sleep campaign; for educational purposes only; NICHD, NIH, DHHS; <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids>

- Remember in the last picture how gravity helps pull food down into the trachea if the baby spits up? That makes it more likely for the baby to choke.
- Now look at this picture—when the baby is on its back, the esophagus is below the trachea. So if the baby spits up, the food comes up the food pipe, but it would have to work against gravity to get into the trachea. So the baby is **less likely** to choke if it is on its back.
- The other important thing to remember is that all babies spit up. Sometimes you might hear this called “reflux.” Even babies who have a lot of reflux or spit up a lot should sleep on their back. Babies are born with sensors in their mouth, throat, and windpipe that help them know when they are spitting up and to help them swallow it back down into their stomach.

Sleep Position and Choking Risk



**Baby on Back
CORRECT**

If this baby vomits or spits up, gravity might keep food from going into the wind pipe (trachea), making it less likely for the baby to aspirate or choke.

Safe and Healthy Ways to Bond

- Breastfeed your baby
- Read, sing, or talk to your baby
- Hold and snuggle your baby while they are awake



- Some parents think that if they put their baby to sleep in the bed with them, that will help them bond with the baby. We've already talked about why you should never put your baby in the bed with you. Do you remember why? (*allow opportunity for parent to answer*)
- Don't worry—there are still lots of ways that you can bond with your baby. Here are some examples:
 - Breastfeeding: Breastfeeding is the preferred way to feed all babies. Breast milk has so many good nutrients that your baby needs to grow. Breast milk also contains antibodies—these help the baby fight off infection.
 - Reading, singing, or talking to your baby: These are great ways to bond. Even when they're very small, you can do these activities with your baby. They will love to hear your voice and these interactions help their brain grow important connections that will help their learning as they grow older.
 - Holding and snuggling your baby: While the baby is awake, don't be afraid to hold them, snuggle them, and love them. You cannot spoil your baby by holding them too much. Holding your baby and responding to their cries lets them feel safe and loved.

Safe and Healthy Ways to Bond

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Learn More About Safe Sleep



Tennessee Department of Health Safe Sleep Campaign: <http://safesleep.tn.gov>



CDC Safe Sleep Information: <http://www.cdc.gov/sids/Parents-Caregivers.htm>



First Candle: National Infant Safe Sleep Campaign: <http://www.firstcandle.org/new-expectant-parents/bedtime-basics-for-babies/>



kidcentral tn: Resources for TN Parents: <http://www.kidcentraltn.com/>

- I hope you've learned about ways to keep your baby safe while they sleep.
- Here are some other resources that have great information on keeping your baby safe.
- Do you have your phone with you? You could scan these links and visit these web pages. They have good information on how to keep your baby safe while sleeping.

Learn More About Safe Sleep



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kidcentral tn: Resources for TN Parents: <http://www.kidcentraltn.com/>

Safe Sleep For Your Baby

Do Not Smoke

No Toys in Crib

No Bumper Pads or Pillows in Crib

Put Baby to Sleep in Crib

Use a Tight Fitting Sheet

Put Baby on Back to Sleep

Baby Should Sleep on a Firm Mattress

Do Not Overheat or Overdress

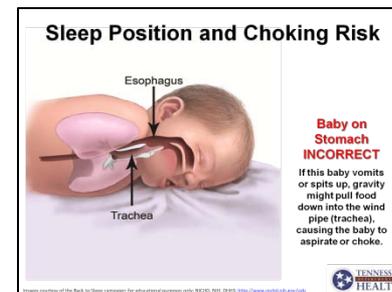
Keeping Your Baby Safe While Sleeping

An Educational Flip Chart For Use by Healthcare Providers

Developed by the:

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

- This flip chart was developed by the Tennessee Department of Health to help hospitals and health care providers teach parents and caregivers about the importance of safe sleep.
- The information contained in this flip chart is based on the latest recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and has been reviewed by pediatric healthcare providers in Tennessee.
- The book is designed so that the teaching pages face the parent and the page that is facing the health care provider contains sample narrative for talking with the parent.
- For questions or additional copies, please contact the Tennessee Department of Health at 615-741-7353.



Parent/
caregiver
page



Provider/
teacher
page



Sleep Position and Choking Risk

Esophagus

Trachea

Baby on Back CORRECT

If this baby vomits or spits up, gravity will pull food away from the wind pipe (trachea), preventing the baby from aspirating or choking.

- Some people worry that if they put their baby on its back, the baby might get choked if they spit up while sleeping. Actually, the baby has a greater chance of choking if they are on their stomach. Here's why:
- Look at this picture. The esophagus, or "food pipe," connects the baby's mouth and stomach. The trachea, or "wind pipe," connects the baby's nose and mouth with the lungs.
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TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH