

Breastfeeding and Safe Sleep: Develop your plan!



Breastfeeding

There are many benefits to breastfeeding or feeding with expressed human milk for both baby and mother. Breast milk provides a baby with ideal nutrition and supports growth and development. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for at least the first six months of the baby's life. Breastfeeding also helps reduce the risk of sleep-related deaths. Breastfeeding can be hard and it can be tiring, and so can motherhood. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Family and friends want to help, allow them! Here are some ways a partner, friends and family can help during your breastfeeding journey.

- **Give help during the day**

Partners or other support people can attend to the baby so mom can take a nap. They can also help by preparing meals, doing laundry cleaning or helping care for other children. Taking duties off mom during the day allows her to get the rest she needs.

- **Support breastfeeding parents by sharing nighttime duties**

People can help by changing baby's diaper, bringing baby to mom to nurse, soothing baby after feeding and putting baby back in the crib to sleep.

- **Be patient with baby, yourself and your partner**

All families have sleep challenges after having a baby. No matter how hard it feels, this time will pass. Support each other and give both credit for being the best parents you can be.

- **Prioritize self care**

Create opportunities to help recharge, such as taking a walk outside, exercising, reading a book, or taking time to just relax and do nothing. These activities can give mothers a mental and physical break that can be just as valuable as a couple hours of sleep.



Resources

- **American Academy of Pediatrics**

aap.org

AAP has guidelines on breastfeeding and the use of human milk, as well as infant safe sleep.

- **National Institutes of Health**

safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov

These videos explain ways to practice safe infant sleep while feeding your baby human milk by breastfeeding.

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

cdc.gov/breastfeeding-benefits

CDC has everything you need to know about breastfeeding and the benefits of baby receiving breast milk.

- **Cribs for Kids**

cribsforkids.org

Cribs for kids is has a new safe sleep academy, full of safe sleep resources and guidelines.

Safe Sleep

Alone: Nothing in the crib but baby and a fitted sheet.

Back: Babies should be placed to sleep on their back for every sleep, every nap, every time.

Crib: Babies need their own sleeping surface and a firm flat surface.



What is your breastfeeding and safe sleep plan?

Here are some ideas for developing your plan:

- **Set an alarm**

- ⇒ Set an alarm when breastfeeding, especially in the middle of the night so if you start to dose off, the alarm will go off and wake you up to move baby to their crib.

- **Have a spouse, partner or support person stay awake with you**

- ⇒ Having someone to talk to and be awake with you helps you stay awake and alert with baby.

- **Have someone you can call in the middle of the night or when breastfeeding while tired**

- ⇒ You may not have someone who can wake up with you but designate someone you can call when you are feeling tired so they can help you stay awake and not fall asleep with baby.

- **Drink water and have a snack**

- ⇒ Get out of bed, sit up or walk around to help you stay awake. Turn on a tv show, read or use your phone to help. Turning on the light can also help as well.

For additional information on safe sleep, email:
safesleep@health.in.gov

