



Safe Sleep for My Baby

A guide for parents

Baden-Württemberg
Ministerium für Soziales,
Gesundheit und Integration



Dear Parents,

Your baby's sleep is an important matter in the first weeks and months of life.

Your own circadian rhythm as parents is also influenced by this. This makes it all the more important that your baby gets healthy and safe sleep.

The sleeping times of your child are also brief relaxation periods for you as parents and give you renewed strength in the often demanding first weeks and months.

This brochure is intended to give you tips on what you can do to ensure your baby sleeps well and safely.

I hope that you and your baby's nights are as peaceful as possible so that you can enjoy many happy moments together when you are well rested.

Best regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Manne Lucha".

Manne Lucha
Minister for Social Affairs, Health and
Integration Baden-Württemberg

This guide is based on the recommendations of the Deutsche Akademie für Kinderheilkunde und Jugendmedizin (German Academy for Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine) and the Gemeinsame Elterninitiative Plötzlicher Säuglingstod (GEPS) e.V. (Joint Parents' Initiative concerning Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) (www.geps.de), published in the "Safe Sleep for My Baby" leaflet issued as part of the state initiative concerning the health of mothers and children in North Rhine-Westphalia. Adoption of the concept, text and design with the kind approval of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

A baby should always sleep on their back!

Put your child on their back to sleep from the outset. The supine position has proven to be the safest sleeping position.

In many cases, there is concern that vomit will more easily get into the lungs of a child lying on their back. There is no clear evidence in this regard. Your child has protective reflexes that work well even when they lie on their back.

EA flattening of the back of the head on one side can be a consequence of hem lying on their back. To avoid this, lay your child down with their head alternately at the top and the bottom of the cot. This way, you will change the position of their head towards the light. Carry and feed your child holding them alternately in your

right arm and left arm so that they do not develop a favourite side. If the baby's head develops a flat spot, this will usually grow out over time.

Only place your child on their tummy when they are awake and with supervision. This is then an ideal position for them to further develop their motor skills.

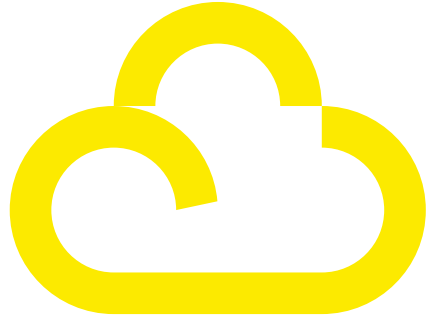
Smoking: No!

Smoking is a risk factor for many diseases. Not only for those who smoke but also for your child. During pregnancy and thereafter. Make sure that your child grows up in a smoke-free environment! This request is addressed to mothers, fathers and other people who smoke in the vicinity of the child.

Child within reach

Let your child sleep in the parents' bedroom but in their own cot during the first two years of life. They will be positively stimulated by the sounds and movements of the parents. You will not mollycoddle your child doing this, they need you to be close by. It is also convenient for breastfeeding when the cot is next to the parents' bed.

Sleeping in a separate room is rather unfavourable for the child's safe sleep!



Sleeping bags rather than covers

Use a sleeping bag – that your child wears – instead of a blanket. Your child can pull blankets over their head. Or your child can wriggle onto the blanket and sink into it.

Important:

- Make sure to get the right size of sleeping bag for your child's body length. Normal newborn babies require size 50 to 56.
- The neckline must be small enough so that the child's head cannot slip through it.
- The armholes must not be too large, otherwise the child will wriggle down in the sleeping bag and the neckline will press against the baby's soft neck.
- If the child is too cold, put on warmer clothes. Avoid a sleeping bag and blanket combination!

Room to breathe

The child's mattress should be relatively firm and breathable. Pillows, fleeces, a baby nest or mattress that is too soft do not belong in a cot. Your child's head will sink too deep into it (maximum sink depth: 1.5 to 2 cm). This can lead to overheating and breathing in exhaled air again.

Cuddly toys can also restrict the air circulation and cause a build-up of heat if your child's face rests against or is covered by cuddly toys. It is therefore better to fix them to the bars of the cot. Your child does not need them whilst they are asleep.

Do not use a waterproof mat in the cot. It is not breathable and can therefore also lead to overheating. Long canopies, mosquito nets, blankets or loose sheets are dangerous because your child can pull them over their head or become entangled in them.

Avoid overheating

Room temperatures of 16 to 18 °C are ideal for sleeping. Ensure that the bedroom is adequately ventilated (shock ventilation 2 to 3 times a day for approx. 10 minutes).

Babies often have cold hands and feet. This does not indicate their body temperature. It is best to check this between their shoulder blades: Your child should feel warm here but not sweaty. Your child does not need to wear gloves or a hat in the house.

Breastfeeding

Breast milk is the best food for your baby. In addition to the many well-known benefits, there is another one: Your child's sleep will be safer. Try to exclusively breastfeed for 6 months. Please ask your paediatrician or midwife from what point your child needs complementary food.

Do not give up breastfeeding, even if you cannot stop smoking. However, make sure that you have a smoke-free period around the breastfeeding session; this means that you should not smoke for at least one hour before breastfeeding.



Dummies

Studies have shown that dummies make sleep safer! Make sure that breastfeeding is working well before using a dummy. The dummy should not delay or even cause you to skip a breastfeeding session. A child's need to suck should always be satisfied first on the mother's breast.

Children who use a dummy for sleeping should always be given it when they are going to sleep. Your child will no longer need the dummy after their first birthday.

Adhere to fixed daily routines and daily rituals for babies

The need for sleep varies depending on the child and babies usually only sleep through the night (5 to 6 hours continuous sleep) after a few months. Your small child needs fixed daily routines and minimal change.

Stick to a fixed daily routine and fixed rituals when feeding, caring for and putting your child to bed. Sometimes a child cannot sleep due to external factors. But sometimes it is also acid reflux from the stomach that causes the child pain. Bloating can also make the child restless.

If your child sleeps badly, is very restless or does not want to sleep at all, talk to your paediatrician or midwife. Calming medication is not a solution for these problems!





**My baby
sleeps safely
in a sleeping
bag!**

- **Lying on their back!**
- **In a smoke-free environment!**
- **In their own cot bed in the parents' bedroom!**
- **Preferably breastfed!**
- **No baby nest, pillows and blankets in the cot!**
- **No fleece and waterproof mat!**

Presented by:

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