Putting Your Baby Safely to Sleep

We all want our infants to be cozy and comfortable while sleeping, but a baby's bedtime needs are different than an adult's. Follow these tips to help keep your child safe while he or she sleeps.

Bedtime and Nap Tips:

••• **Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep.** Laying a baby on his or her side may cause your baby to roll over onto his or her tummy.

••• Keep your baby's head **free of blankets** or clothing to prevent suffocation.

••• **Dress your baby lightly for sleep** so he doesn't get too hot and keep the room at a comfortable temperature. Overheating may increase the risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

••• Cribs are tested by professionals to make sure they are safe, so choose a crib or bassinet that has been **certified for safety.**

••• Choose a **firm mattress.**

••• Stuffed animals, blankets, and bumpers don't seem harmful, but placing them in the crib with your infant **can affect your baby's ability to breathe.**

••• Keep your baby's crib in a **smoke-free zone.**

••• **Tummy time** is a great way to strengthen your baby's neck and shoulder muscles, but make sure your baby's tummy time is spent during supervised play – when your infant is awake and someone is watching him or her.

••• **Breastfeeding** and the use of pacifiers have been shown to reduce the risk of SIDS.