

Infant Sleep Positioning and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

Parents and caregivers should always place healthy infants on their backs when putting them down to sleep. This is because studies have shown a decreased incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in infants who sleep on their backs.

There is no evidence that sleeping on the back is harmful to healthy infants. Keep the following points in mind: Placing a child to sleep on the back has the lowest risk and is preferred. Sleeping on the side has a higher risk of crib death and sleeping on the stomach has the highest risk.

Do not place your infant to sleep on soft surfaces or with pillows or stuffed toys. They could obstruct your child's airway. Waterbeds are equally dangerous.

This is a dramatic change in advice. For many years we have told parents to have their children sleep on their stomachs. Once babies can roll over, then they can sleep however they like.

Also keep in mind that it is extremely dangerous, and therefore NEVER acceptable for an infant to sleep in the same bed with a parent.