Babies should be:
⇒ Sleeping ALONE
⇒ On their BACK
⇒ In a safe CRIB

Alone: Babies need their own space (crib / bassinet / pack-n-play) to sleep safely. They should not sleep with adults or other children. Be sure to share your room, but not your bed. Room-sharing lets you keep a close watch over your baby while preventing accidents that could happen if baby sleeps in an adult bed. Nothing should be in the crib but baby. This means no pillows, bumper pads, blankets, or toys.

Back: Put baby to sleep on their back, not on their tummy or side. Only put baby on their tummy for supervised playtime (“tummy time”) – which they should have every day to help develop strong shoulder and neck muscles.

Crib: Use a safety-approved crib, bassinet, or pack-n-play with a firm mattress and a fitted sheet. If baby falls asleep on a bed, couch, armchair, or in a sling, swing or other carrier, move baby to a crib.

Other tips to keep your baby safe while they sleep:

- Use a one-piece sleeper. Don’t use blankets. Baby will be perfectly comfortable in a one-piece sleeper without the risk of sleeping with a blanket (which could end up covering mouth and nose).
- Be sure baby is not too warm while they sleep. Dressing baby in light layers and keeping the room temperature between 68 and 75 degrees is best.
- Breastfeed your baby. Breastfeeding for 2 months cuts baby’s SIDs risk almost in half.
- Try using a pacifier at sleep time if baby likes it (but don’t force baby to take it).
- Make sure baby is up to date with vaccines.
- If your baby is in a front or back baby carrier, be sure that baby’s face is always visible.
- Never use a car seat, baby swing, or other carrier without properly fastening all the straps.
- Make sure no one smokes in your home or around your baby.
- Don’t use alcohol or drugs. They can impair your thinking and make you drowsy.
- Don’t rely on home baby monitors, which can cause unnecessary worry. Monitors should only be used if your baby needs home oxygen or has serious breathing problems.
- Make sure everyone caring for your baby follows these tips!

For more information on safe sleep, visit health.ny.gov/safesleep.
Women of child bearing age: Taking a vitamin with folic acid can help prevent birth defects.

Did you know? Half of all pregnancies are unplanned — that’s why it’s so important that all women of childbearing age take the recommended amount of folic acid, even if they’re not planning to get pregnant. Currently, only about 1 in 3 women are taking a multivitamin that has folic acid in it.

According to the March of Dimes, in the United States, more than 120,000 babies will be born with birth defects this year. That includes almost 3,000 babies born with neural tube defects, which affect the spine and brain. Many of these neural tube defects could be prevented if all women of childbearing age take daily multivitamins that include folic acid.

Folic acid is a B vitamin. If a woman has enough folic acid in her body a month before and during pregnancy, this can help prevent major birth defects that affect the spine and brain. Folic acid comes from fortified foods or supplements, or a combination of the two. Folate is the natural form of folic acid found in many foods.

Some foods rich in folate include:
spinach, artichoke, broccoli, potatoes (with their skin),
lettuce, avocado, papaya, orange juice, pasta (enriched),
bagels, white or whole wheat bread, cooked lentils and beans, soy nuts, liver (cooked), or sunflower seeds without the shell.

Other ways to prevent birth defects:
- See your healthcare provider regularly
- Avoid alcohol at any time during pregnancy
- Avoid smoking cigarettes
- Avoid “street drugs”
- Learn easy ways to cope with stress
  - Healthy ways to cope include eating healthy & well-balanced meals, exercising on a regular basis, getting plenty of sleep, and giving yourself a break if you feel stressed out.
- Prevent infections
  - Easy ways to do this include washing your hands frequently, cooking meat until it’s well done, and avoiding contact with people who have an infection.
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Talk to your provider about medications you are taking
- Discuss vaccinations with your provider

Source: HealthDay News, CDC

Need help finding a provider? Simply dial 2-1-1!
Free—Confidential—24/7—Every Language

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Keep a healthy mouth for a healthy future

Germs cause cavities—we all have germs in our mouths that use the food we eat to make acid. This acid weakens teeth and causes cavities. If we don’t brush after we eat, this acid stays on our teeth for 20 minutes EVERY time we eat or drink. When teeth are exposed to acid over and over again, the teeth weaken and eventually begin to decay. To prevent cavities, clean away food and germs. Make sure you and your child brush every day – after breakfast and before bed.

Make tooth brushing fun for your child!

When you brush your child’s teeth at night, make a game out of it! Tell him or her you’re going to get all of the “cavity germs”. Be sure to say fun things like, “Oh, I got one!” or “Oh, there’s another one! I’m going to get it!”

- Reward good brushing behavior. Use what motivates your child – stickers, reward charts, a favorite bedtime story, or making sure to say “I’m so proud of you!” followed by a huge high five.
- Sing a song about tooth brushing:
  
  A Brushing We Will Go  
  (Sung to the tune of “A Hunting We Will Go”)  
  “A brushing we will go, a brushing we will go! My smile goes up, my smile goes down, a brushing we will go! A brushing we will go, a brushing we will go! My smile goes up, my smile goes down, a brushing we will go!”

Cook tooth healthy foods and beverages:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Popcorn (Watch out for popcorn hulls! They can get stuck in between the teeth & gums and cause pain)
- Nuts
- Whole grain breads
- Whole grain crackers, rice and pastas
- Yogurt
- Water
- Milk

Tips for keeping baby warm this winter

As winter approaches, it’s time to start thinking about all the ways we can keep our babies comfortable. Below are a few tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics to keep baby warm and cozy throughout the season.

Dressing for the outdoors:

- Multiple thin layers will keep baby warm and dry. Make sure he or she has warm boots, gloves and a hat. Boots should be big enough to allow for two pairs of socks on the feet.
- A good rule of thumb to follow is one more layer of clothing than adults would wear in the same weather.
- Blankets, quilts, pillows, bumpers, and loose bedding should be left out of baby’s sleeping area. These are associated with an increased risk of SIDS. Try using one-piece sleepers or wearable blankets instead.

Dressing for the road…

Tips to keep baby warm in a car seat:

- Bring the carrier inside so that it remains at room temperature, not outdoor temperature.
- Dress baby in thin layers:
  - Start with tighter fitting clothes on bottom (tights, leggings, long-sleeved body suits).
  - Add pants and a warmer top (sweater or thermal-knit shirt). A fleece jacket could be added over top.
  - For very cold weather, long underwear is a great layering option.
  - Don’t forget hats, mittens, socks and booties.
- If it’s very cold, a blanket or coat can be laid over the top of the car seat harness straps after baby is buckled up.

For more information about keeping baby warm in the cold weather, visit healthychildren.org
Prenatal Care - Medicaid Prenatal Services Program

Early and regular check-ups are important to you and your baby’s health.

Medicaid Prenatal Services Program offers complete pregnancy care and other health care services to women and teens who live in New York State.

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