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## Newborn Sleeping Positions

By Sarah Veda

It can all be very confusing. Put the baby on her tummy, no her side, no her back. Over the years, we've been told many different things about sleeping positions for babies. Here's the scoop, from my perspective, anyway.

Years ago, it was common practice for babies to sleep on their stomachs. And, there was good reason - babies sleep more soundly on their tummies than in any other position. Most of us were put to sleep on our stomachs, and we turned out fine, right?

But, now we have a little more information. Putting your baby to sleep on her back or side can reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) by as much as 50 percent. Therefore, most pediatricians will recommend that you put the baby to sleep on her back from the beginning. There were a few years there where doctors recommended that babies sleep on their sides, as this not only reduces the risk of SIDS, but also reduces the risk that the child might choke on her vomit if she spits up (which, by the way, is rare). But, today most doctors say the back or side is fine - it's really hard to keep a newborn on her side.

If your baby fusses a lot when sleeping on her back, try swaddling her, or try putting her on her side with a rolled up blanket for support. For many babies, this is enough to make them comfortable. If your baby is sleeping on her back, do be sure to give her some waking time on her tummy, to help with muscle development, and to give her a new perspective on life!

Now, all that said, if your baby is really having a hard time sleeping on her back, talk to your pediatrician about having the baby sleep on her stomach. If your baby is healthy, your doctor may say it's ok to put her to sleep on her stomach, as long as the mattress is firm. In addition, babies with respiratory problems, upper airway malformations, and babies who spit up a lot, may actually be safer on their tummies.

Each baby is different, and you have to treat them as such. Sleeping on the back is the guideline, but with your doctor's help, you should evaluate your baby, and her sleeping habits, individually. Keep in mind that in a few months your baby will begin turning over, and will choose her favorite position on her

own.

Sarah is a 41 year old wife and mother of two boys and one girl. She spent many years as a manager in the corporate world, and gave it up to be a stay at home mom. Go to

<http://www.infantresources.com>

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### **Helping Your Baby Sleep Well**

**By Linda Davis**

Should you let sleeping babies lie? Babies spend most of their day sleeping. It is during sleep that their body grows and gets stronger. Regardless of whether your baby is a heavy sleeper or a light one, it is important to take steps to enhance their sleeping patterns by recreating the environment of the womb.

First create a cozy sleeping area. Although cribs are the first sleeping space that most parents think of for their newborn babies, the space may be too large for your baby sleep in comfortably. Why? You have to keep in mind that for nine month his or her little body was snug inside the uterus. Having such a large space between their body and the walls of a crib can make them feel uncomfortable and scared. It's best to let your baby sleep in a bassinet or a baby carriage for the first few months after his or her birth.

Second, help your baby relax with soothing sounds. Inside the womb, your baby experienced the sounds of his or her mothers body. For many months your baby was comforted by the sounds of a heartbeat or the gurgling sounds of a stomach. These internal sounds helped to keep the baby happy and relaxed. When putting your baby to sleep the sound of a humming fan or the soft sound of a music box will help them sleep better.

Don't undermine your baby's sleeping habit by not letting them sleep too much in the day. If your baby has problems sleeping at night and this is interrupting your sleep, you may try fix this problem by keeping the baby up during the day. While this may work with small children by causing them to be more tired at night, it is not recommend for a newborn baby. This will only cause your baby to become sleep deprived, which in turn will cause the baby to sleep more restlessly. A well rested baby has healthier sleeping patterns than one that's tired due to being kept awake during the day, when they really wanted to be sleeping.

For the parents of a newborn child, a good night's sleep can seem elusive. It does get better as the child gets older, but in the mean time, you can take these few steps to encourage your baby to sleep well.

Linda Davis contributes to several web sites, including

<http://tocip.com>

and

<http://yetra.com>



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