

Bear this in mind:

Research has given us new knowledge about factors that may trigger SIDS. Sleeping on its stomach, being too hot and second-hand smoke are examples of this. Avoiding these factors will be effective measures for preventing SIDS, but there are no guarantees. Some infants die even if they have never slept on their stomach, never breathed in second-hand smoke and have slept in rooms with the appropriate temperature.

Har du spørsmål?

Do you have any questions?


You can obtain more information from the public health clinic where you live or from Landsforeningen til støtte ved krybbedød (the Norwegian SIDS Society), Arbinsgt. 7, N-0253 Oslo. Telephone: 22 54 52 00 Fax: 22 54 52 01

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How to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

Hvordan redusere risikoen for krybbedød

This is what we can do to reduce the number of children dying from SIDS (cot death) in Norway:

- Put the infant to sleep on its back right from birth
- Make sure the infant is not too hot or that its head is covered while sleeping
- Avoid smoking during pregnancy and in the vicinity of the infant
- Breastfeed your infant if possible
- Let the infant sleep in its own bed in the same bedroom as the parents
- Allow the infant to use a dummy when you put it to bed



Put the infant to sleep on its back right from birth

It has been documented that there is an increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome when babies sleep on their stomach or on their side. All infants should sleep on their back unless there are medical reasons for not doing this. Even if the child should throw up while lying on its back there is no increased risk of suffocating. Circular IK-36/97 "Infants – accustoming infants to sleeping on their back to prevent sudden unexpected infant death", sent to maternity wards by the Norwegian Board of Health, supports this message. But you should allow your infant to lie on its stomach when it is awake – under adult supervision. When outdoors, infants always need to have more clothes on than adults. Make sure the covers are not over the infant's head so its airways are not blocked. In winter, the indoor temperature is often higher than it is in summer. Remove warm outdoor clothes and hats when in heated places.



Do not let the baby become too hot and make sure its head is not covered while sleeping

Infants regulate their body temperature best when lying on their backs. An infant may become too hot if the room temperature is high, or if the infant is over-dressed or is under too many/thick covers. The temperature in the room where the infant is sleeping must be comfortable, around + 18 °C. Feel the baby's stomach. If it is more than comfortably warm, the infant is too hot. Take off some of the baby's clothes when it has a fever and use less covers in the bed. Make sure the infant is not subjected to cold draughts.



Avoid smoking during pregnancy and in the vicinity of the infant

Women who smoke have an increased risk of losing their baby from SIDS compared to non-smokers. Stopping or reducing smoking will benefit the infant. Do not subject your child to second-hand smoke.



Breastfeed your child if possible.

Infants who are breastfed are at lower risk of SIDS.



Let the child sleep in its own bed in the same bedroom as the parents

Infants who sleep in their own bed in their parent's bedroom have the lowest risk of SIDS. Recent research shows that sleeping in the same bed as the parents is linked to increased risk of SIDS if the mother smokes. If the mother (or the adult) does not smoke, there is a slightly higher, but declining risk up to four months of age. There is a risk that it will be too hot or stuffy if the child sleeps in the same bed as the parents.



Allow the infant to use a dummy when you put it to bed.

Studies show that regular use of a dummy (comforter/pacifier) may have a preventive effect. It is recommended that breastfeeding is established before a dummy is introduced.