

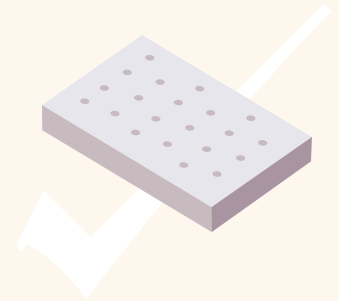
# Breastsleeping DOs and DON'Ts

## DO:

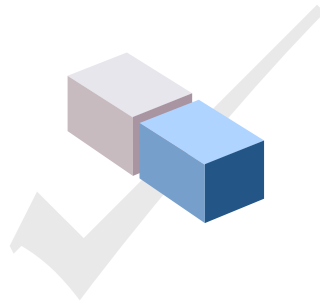
Ask your partner or anyone else sharing the bed if they are comfortable with the baby sleeping there, and if they are willing to share responsibility for the baby's safety throughout the night.



Make sure your baby is sleeping on a clean, firm, non-quilted surface, with plenty of space for all occupants. A mattress in the middle of the room with no frame is ideal.



Thoroughly check for any gaps or bars that may cause entrapment.



Provide a smoke-free environment for your baby. If anyone sharing the bed smokes tobacco (no matter where or when they smoke), have your baby sleep on a separate surface.



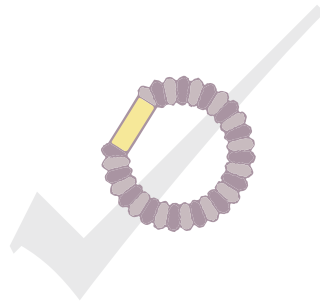
Remove stuffed animals or dolls, heavy blankets, thick duvets, extra pillows, or any other objects that may pose a suffocation risk. Light sheets and breathable blankets are acceptable.



Assess your ability to respond to your baby throughout the night.



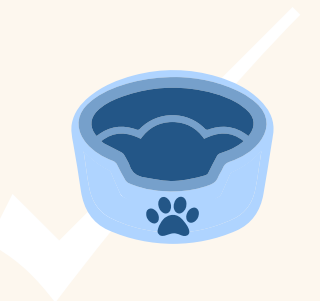
Tie up long hair in a bun or other style that will not be able to wrap around the infant. For extremely long hair, even a ponytail or braid may pose a hazard.



Place your baby on his or her back to sleep. Position the baby's head by the breastsleeping mother's chest, and not by the pillows. When breastfeeding in bed, make sure the baby returns to this position at the end of each feed.



Keep pets out of the bedroom if they are able to climb onto the bed.



Place your baby between the breastsleeping mother and the edge of the bed, so the baby is not between two individuals. If the second adult is fully and enthusiastically invested in the baby being there, and is confident that they can respond to the infant's needs, this may be more flexible.



# DON'T:

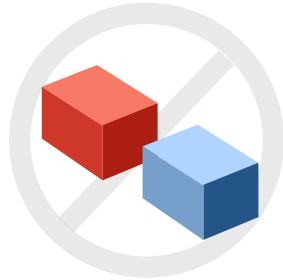
Do not breastsleep if you or your partner smoke, or if you smoked tobacco during your pregnancy.



Do not breastsleep if anyone sharing the bed has consumed sedatives, medications, alcohol, marijuana, or any substance that causes altered consciousness or marked drowsiness.



Don't leave any space between the bed and the wall where the baby could roll and become trapped. Make sure that the mattress fits tightly against the headboard and footboard, and remove the bed frame if at all possible.



Do not breastsleep if anyone sharing the bed, especially the breastsleeping mother, is ill or tired to the point where it would be difficult to respond to the baby.



Do not breastsleep if a parent is markedly obese, unless he or she feels confident that the mattress is stiff enough to compensate for the greater weight differential.



Do not allow older siblings who do not understand the risks of suffocation to sleep in the same bed with infants less than one year old.



Do not breastsleep if pets are able or likely to climb into the bed.



Don't use thick bedding, and don't allow anything to cover the head or face of the baby. Sheets and blankets should be porous, preferably cotton. In cold weather, use layers of thin bedding rather than one heavier blanket.



Don't dress your baby too warmly or set the thermostat too high. If you are comfortable, your baby probably is too. Remember, close bodily contact increases body temperature.



Never leave long hair down or wear nightclothes with strings or ties. These pose a strangulation risk for the baby.



Never place babies alone in an adult bed. Babies should always sleep under supervision.



For more information, visit [PlatypusMedia.com](http://PlatypusMedia.com) or contact [Info@PlatypusMedia.com](mailto:Info@PlatypusMedia.com)

Information excerpted from *Safe Infant Sleep* (2020)

This handout is not intended to be a replacement for advice from your health care provider. An important part of informed self care is knowing when to seek out your community's health care resources. No medical or legal responsibility is assumed by the author or publisher.