

Nursery Safety



One of the most important jobs for parents is to keep their child safe from harm. Because newborns will spend most of their time sleeping, parents need to make sure the nursery is a safe place. Following a few tips can help keep babies healthy and happy.

Cribs

- Use a firm mattress that is the correct size for the crib. There should be no gaps.
- If you can fit 2 fingers between the mattress and the side of the crib, it is too loose.
- Cover the mattress with a snug fitting crib sheet.
- The slats of the crib should be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart. A baby's head could get trapped between widely spaced slats.
- Do not place pillows, blankets, bumper pads, or stuffed toys in the crib with the baby. Use sleepers or sleep sacks instead of blankets.
- Remove any hanging toys or mobiles when the baby is able to get up on all fours (usually around 5 months of age).
- Never use a crib with loose or missing pieces.

Portable Cribs and Playpens

- Never leave the side of a mesh playpen down. A baby could become trapped and suffocate in the mesh.
- Once a baby can pull himself up to standing, keep large toys out of the playpen. He might try to use these items as steps.
- Remove all toys and stuffed animals before putting a baby down to sleep.

Changing Tables

- Always use the changing table's safety belt to help prevent your baby from falling.
- Keep at least one hand on the baby at all times, even when using the safety belt.
- Never leave a baby on the changing table unsupervised.

Nursery Safety Tips

- Cover all electrical outlets with safety covers.
- Place cribs and other nursery furniture away from windows.
- Keep cords from blinds and draperies out of reach. If possible, use cordless window treatments.
- Never place a baby to sleep on a soft surface, such as a water bed, sofa, soft mattress or pillow. Babies should sleep on their backs on a firm mattress.
- Keep powders and other products out of the baby's reach.
- Use caution when using secondhand nursery furniture. It may have been recalled or may be missing parts or instructions.
- Check for crib and furniture recalls at www.recalls.gov.