

## Crib or Bassinet

### How to Choose a Safe Crib

- Bars should be spaced no more than 2 3/8 inches apart.
- The mattress should be very firm. It should fit snugly, with no space between it and the crib walls.
- The top of the crib rail should be at least 26 inches from the top of the mattress. Periodically lower the mattress as your child gets taller.
- The headboards and footboards should be solid, with no decorative cutouts.
- Do not use cribs with drop rails. These are not safe. Avoid these if you are purchasing a used crib.
- Crib bumpers (bumper pads) are no longer recommended. There is no evidence that bumper pads can prevent serious injuries, and they pose a risk of suffocation, strangulation, or entrapment. In addition, older babies can use them for climbing out of the crib. They should no longer be used.
- Keep large toys and stuffed animals out of the crib. Your baby may use them to get a leg up and over the rail. Pillows, bulky comforters, and heavy blankets pose a suffocation risk and do not belong in a crib.
- Place the crib away from windows, where direct sunlight and drafts can make your baby uncomfortable. A crib can become uncomfortably hot if placed too near a radiator. Also make sure that there are no strings from blinds or window treatments close by that can wrap around the baby's neck.
- Once your child is about 3 feet tall, he should start sleeping in a bed. If you are worried about him falling out of bed, you may want to start with the mattress on the floor.
- Fit your baby's crib with a firm mattress and make sure there's no space between the mattress and crib walls. Tuck sheet over plastic mattress cover. All fabrics that are used should be flame retardant. Your baby should never sleep on a water bed, pillow, sofa, armchair,

or other soft surface. Thick blankets, duvets, comforters, pillows, and large, soft, stuffed toys should never be used in babies' cribs. A baby can easily be smothered if trapped under bulky bedding or when his face is pressed up against a pillow.

- Babies do not need extra support, such as from rolled blankets or commercial devices, to keep them on their backs. Cumbersome materials like these serve to clutter up the crib and may be hazardous for a baby.
- **Use caution when a product claims to reduce the risk of SIDS.** Wedges, positioners, special mattresses and specialized sleep surfaces have not been shown to reduce the risk of SIDS, according to the AAP.
- **Do not rely on home heart pulse oximeters or breathing monitors to reduce the risk of SIDS.** If you have questions about using these monitors for other health conditions, talk with your pediatrician.
- **There isn't enough research on bedside or in-bed sleepers.** The AAP can't recommend for or against these products because there have been no studies that have looked at their effect on SIDS or if they increase the risk of injury and death from suffocation.