

Information Statement

BREASTFEEDING

SIDS and Kids recommends breastfeeding

- Breastfeeding is healthy for mother and baby in many ways
- Some studies have shown that breastfeeding reduces the risk of SIDS for babies while other studies do not show a reduced risk for breastfed babies
- SIDS and Kids recommend breastfeeding where possible

Can breastfeeding reduce the risk of SIDS?

Breastfeeding is good for your baby. SIDS has occurred in both breast and bottle fed babies. There is conflicting information about SIDS and breastfeeding in the research. Some studies do not show that breastfeeding reduces the risk of SIDS. Some studies show a reduced risk of SIDS with breastfeeding [1-2] while others do not [3]. We recommend breastfeeding your baby if possible.

Why is breastfeeding important?

Breastmilk is the best food for babies [4-5] because it is a complete food containing everything needed for the first 6 months of life, satisfying both hunger and thirst; increasing the baby's resistance to infection, disease, allergies and food intolerance. It also protects against diarrheal and lower respiratory tract infections.

Breastfeeding is good for mothers too as it is a convenient, cheap and a readily available, fresh, clean and safe nutriment for baby. Breastfeeding also helps your body recover after childbirth.

SIDS and Kids recommend breastfeeding where possible.

The SIDS and Kids Safe Sleeping program is based on scientific evidence and was developed by Australian SIDS researchers, paediatricians, pathologists, and child health experts with input from overseas experts in the field.

To Reduce the Risks of SIDS and Fatal Sleep Accidents:

1. Sleep baby on the back from birth, not on the tummy or side
2. Sleep baby with face uncovered (no doonas, pillows, lambs wool, bumpers or soft toys)
3. Avoid exposing babies to tobacco smoke before birth and after
4. Provide a safe sleeping environment (safe cot, safe mattress, safe bedding)
5. Sleep baby in its own safe sleeping environment next to the parent's bed for the first six to twelve months of life

For further information:

- visit the SIDS and Kids website at www.sidsandkids.org or phone us on 1300308307
- The Australian Breastfeeding Association www.breastfeeding.asn.au
- Baby feeding page on the Health *Insite* website, an Australian government initiative funded by the Department of Health and Ageing. Includes "breastfeeding" and "Bottle feeding" pages. www.healthinsite.gov.au/topics/baby_feeding accessed 1 April 2008

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4. World Health Organization (2003) Global strategy for infant and young child feeding. Geneva: WHO ISBN 92 4 156221 8.
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