



Central Michigan District Health Department

Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities



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PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

To: Local Media

From: Central Michigan District Health Department

RE: Safe Sleep Awareness Month – October

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Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) would like to remind the public that October is Safe Sleep Awareness Month. Though parents try to keep their babies out of harm's way, the sad reality is that **there is an average of 143 Michigan infants that die each year due to sleep-related causes, and these deaths are overwhelmingly preventable.** According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 3,400 infants die annually in the United States from sleep-related infant deaths. [CDC, 2022]

“CMDHD has programs to educate families about safe sleep, including our Maternal Infant Health Program, WIC, and our Healthy Futures Program. We can also provide referrals for helping to find safe sleep resources for families that do not have cribs or a safe place to sleep. For more information, reach out to your local health department,” said Kelly Conley, CMDHD Personal Health Director.

Follow these Safe Sleep Steps to keep your baby safe:

- Place baby alone on their back, in a crib, bassinet, or pack n' play for every sleep - naps and at night.
- Use a firm mattress with a tightly fitted sheet.
- Keep baby's sleep space clutter free - no pillows, blankets, toys, or bumper pads.
- Breastfeed if you can. Breastfeeding has been shown to reduce the risk of sleep related deaths.
- Keep baby's sleep space where you can see and hear them. Share your room, not your bed. When babies sleep with adults or other children, they run the risk of being rolled on and suffocated. Or they could get stuck or wedged between the bed and wall or in the cushions of furniture, causing suffocation.
- Avoid covering baby's head or overheating. Instead of a blanket, consider using a sleep sack, wearable blanket, or footed sleeper to keep baby warm.
- Remind everyone who cares for your baby, including babysitters and family members, how to keep a sleeping baby safe, especially noting to put baby on their back in a safe sleep location.

Please visit us online at www.cmdhd.org.

- Car seats, swings and other sitting devices are not recommended for sleep. Babies can suffocate while sleeping in a device that puts them at an incline. Their airway is only the size of a drinking straw and can easily be pinched off if their head were to slump.
- Don't allow anyone to smoke around your baby. Smoking during pregnancy and/or exposing baby to secondhand smoke increases the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and sleep-related infant death. Recent research shows that smoking even one cigarette a day during pregnancy doubles a baby's risk of sleep-related death.
- You can follow this link for a safe sleep toolkit. <https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov/resources/toolkit>

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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