Safe Sleeping for Baby

There are a number of things you can do to keep your baby safe while sleeping. These are a few helpful hints:

- Babies should be placed to sleep on their backs unless your caregiver has suggested otherwise. This is the single most important thing you can do to reduce the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).
- Babies should sleep in the parents' bedroom in a crib for the first year of life.
- Use a crib that conforms to the safety standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM)
- Do not cover the baby's head with blankets.
- Do not over-bundle a baby with clothes or blankets.
- Do not let the baby get too hot. Keep the room temperature comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. Dress the baby lightly for sleep. The baby should not feel hot to the touch or sweaty.
- Do not use duvets, sheepskins or pillows in the crib.
- Do not place babies to sleep on adult beds, soft mattresses, sofas, cushions or waterbeds.
- Do not sleep with an infant. You may not wake up if your baby needs help or is impaired in any way. This is especially true if you:
  - Have been drinking.
  - Have been taking medicine that may make you sleep.
  - Have been taking medicine for sleep.
  - Are overly tired.
- **DO NOT SMOKE AROUND YOUR BABY. IT IS ASSOCIATED WITH SIDS.**
- Babies should not sleep in bed with other children because it increases the risk of suffocation. Also, children generally will not recognize a baby in distress.
- A firm mattress is necessary for a baby's sleep. Make sure there are no spaces between crib walls or a wall in which a baby's head may be trapped. Keep the bed close to the ground to minimize injury from falls.
- Keep quilts and comforters out of the bed. Use a light thin blanket tucked in at the bottoms and sides of the bed and have it no higher than the chest.
- Keep toys out of the bed.
- Give your baby plenty of time on their tummy while awake and while you can watch them. This helps their muscles and nervous system. It also prevents the back of the head from getting flat.
- Grownups and older children should never sleep with babies.

Document Released: 12/15/2001 Document Re-Released: 06/05/2009
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.