

# CHENANGO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## HEALTH EDUCATION DIVISION

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# PRESS RELEASE

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### Safe Sleep and Recommendations for Baby

In 2014, approximately 100 infants died suddenly or unexpectedly in New York State. The numbers for Chenango County have also increased from 2014 to present. In light of the increased number of infant deaths in Chenango County due to unsafe sleep environments, the **Chenango County Health Department** is urging friends and family of expectant parents to learn about the current best practices to keep baby safe and to choose safe baby gifts when shopping for showers.

The message is quite simple, follow the **ABC's of Safe Sleep**:

**ALONE** – No co-sleeping, nothing in the crib including blankets, bumpers, toys, etc.

**BACK** - Always place baby on their back on a flat, firm surface for any sleep time

**CRIB** - Never fall asleep with the baby while you are in a recliner, chair, sofa, etc.

We've all been to baby showers where the expectant parents opened packages that contained many of the items we now know should not be put in the crib with the baby, such as padded bumpers, sleeping wedges, stuffed toys, pillows, and fluffy bedding. Baby showers are an ideal opportunity to have the conversation about a safe sleep environment. Unfortunately, too many parents and caregivers haven't heard the message, but hopefully they will listen to informed friends and family members.

Babies are not able to roll over or even turn their heads until they are older, so they can easily suffocate due to something as innocent as a pillow, toy, blanket or bumper pads in the crib. Instead of these types of items, here is a list of shower gifts that will keep babies safer:

- ✓ Sleep sack
- ✓ Fitted sheet
- ✓ Bassinet
- ✓ Portable crib
- ✓ Firm mattress to fit to crib or bassinet

- ✓ Breastfeeding related items
- ✓ Tummy Time play items

A sleep sack is the preferred sleepwear for an infant under the age of one and is recommended in place of covering the infant with a blanket. It is designed to keep the baby's temperature comfortable for sleep, making blankets and quilts unnecessary. The **Chenango County Health Department Nursing Division** will be mailing out a free sleep sack and a packet of information to all parents of new babies born in Chenango County during 2018. We hope this will help to inform and remind parents about safe sleep practices.

The best way to prevent sleep-related infant deaths is to follow the American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment which are:

- Always place your baby on his or her back for every sleep time.
- Always use a firm sleep surface. Car seats and other sitting devices are not recommended for routine sleep.
- The baby should sleep in the same room as the parents, but not in the same bed (room sharing without bed-sharing). Ideally, infants should room-share for the first year of life, but at least for the first six months.
- Keep soft objects or loose bedding out of the crib. This includes pillows, blankets, bumper pads, stuffed toys and any clutter.
- Pregnant women should receive regular prenatal care.
- Avoid smoke exposure during pregnancy and after birth.
- Avoid alcohol and illicit drug use during pregnancy and after birth.
- Breastfeeding is recommended.
- Consider offering a pacifier at nap time and bed time.
- Avoid covering the infant's head or overheating.
- Do not use home cardiorespiratory monitors as a strategy to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Avoid the use of commercial devices that are inconsistent with safe sleep recommendations.
- Infants should receive all recommended vaccinations.
- Supervised, awake tummy time is recommended daily to facilitate development

Infant deaths due to unsafe sleep environments are largely preventable. Using the ABC's of Safe Sleep EVERY time baby sleeps is the key to safety. The **Chenango County Health Department** believes that if we can educate grandmothers, aunts, friends and babysitters, they can help carry the message to parents. It is important to begin the conversation before baby is born and to make sure all caregivers get the message. You can make a difference.

The ABC's of Safe Sleep can be found at [www.health.ny.gov/safesleep](http://www.health.ny.gov/safesleep)  
More details about these recommendations can be found at <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/138/5/e20162938>  
Or [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

If you are interested in other health related topics, log on to the county website ([www.co.chenango.ny.us](http://www.co.chenango.ny.us)) to access the Public Health/Nursing icon. Fill out our new self-referral form and submit your request to us electronically.

Persons with questions or requiring additional information may contact the  
Chenango County Health Department at **(607) 337-1660**.

*Promoting and protecting health, safety, and the quality of life in Chenango County*