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Listening, learning, and living together: it's the science of life.

Sleeping Safely¹

Donna Davis²

Making the announcement to friends and family that you've got a baby on the way is usually cause for celebration. Expectant parents can often become overwhelmed by the good-natured advice that those friends and family who are so willing to share. With two grandmothers-to-be with nursing backgrounds, I was certainly no exception.

However, I've learned that what was considered a good practice when our mothers were raising us, like putting a baby to bed face down, was really a very bad choice.

One of every parent's greatest nightmares is SIDS, or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, the leading cause of death for infants one month to one year old. With greater awareness of safe sleeping practice, SIDS has declined by more than 50% since 1994, yet continues to claim approximately 2,000 babies each year—90% of which occur before they're six months old.

According to The National SIDS/Infant Death Resource Center, there are a number of things parents can do to prevent SIDS, suffocation, or strangulation. For example, place your baby on his or her back and remove all soft bedding from the crib. Also, make certain the crib meets the safety standards of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety

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Commission. Likewise, never allow your baby to sleep in an adult bed, as tempting as it may be to cuddle up in the middle of the night.

For more information on how to prevent SIDS, visit <http://www.familyalbumradio.org> or talk to your doctor about additional risks. Then again, there's always friends and family....

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