

What is swaddling?

Swaddling is wrapping your baby in a blanket or cloth in a certain way. It helps your baby to feel warm and secure like they did when they were inside the womb.

When done the correct way, swaddling can help your baby to:

- Cry less.
- Be less restless.
- Sleep longer and better.

How should I swaddle my baby?

When you swaddle, be sure to leave enough space for your baby's legs to bend up and out at the hips. This allows the hips to grow the correct way and also allows your baby's knees to bend slightly.

To swaddle using a regular baby blanket

1. Lay a blanket on a flat surface in the shape of a diamond. Fold the top corner down to make a straight edge.



2. Place your baby on the blanket with their shoulders even with the top edge.



In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Safe swaddling, continued

3. Place your baby's arms together on their chest under their chin.



4. Wrap the side of the blanket on your baby's left side over their chest. Then, tuck the blanket under their right side.



5. Wrap the side of the blanket on your baby's right side over their chest. Then, tuck the blanket under their left side.



6. Twist and tuck the bottom of the blanket under your baby. Make sure to leave room for their legs and hips to move.



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Safe swaddling, continued

To swaddle using a swaddling blanket or sleep sack

Follow the directions that come with the blanket or sleep sack. Make sure your baby has room for their legs and hips to move.

How long can I swaddle my baby?

You may swaddle your baby for a few weeks or a few months. It is time to stop swaddling when your baby:

- Begins breaking free of the blanket or sleep sack.
- Starts trying to roll over.

What happens if I swaddle my baby's legs and hips too tightly?

When your baby's hips and legs are tightly wrapped, they cannot move in the correct way. This can put too much pressure on the hips and cause problems.

- One severe (very bad) problem is called hip dysplasia. This means that the hips are too loose or are out of place (dislocated).
- Make sure your baby has room for their legs and hips to move.

What else do I need to know?

ALWAYS lay your baby on their back to sleep.

- This is the safest way for them to sleep unless your doctor tells you something different.
- Place your baby on their back for every sleep, including naps. This helps prevent sleep-related deaths, such as SIDS and suffocation.
- Use a firm mattress without anything else in the crib.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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