

## Safety Awareness – Baby Safety

### Coming home with a new baby

There are many things to consider when arriving home with a new baby. This can be a difficult and tiring time for all involved. It is a good idea to plan for this time before you have the baby. Purchase products needed in advance and prepare and freeze healthy nutritious meals for yourself.

### Feeding young babies

Parents and carers of young babies often feel anxious about feeding. Whether breast-feeding or feeding with formula, it is advisable to seek the advice of professionals.

- Breast-feeding is considered to be the better feeding option for both child and mother. The Nursing Mothers Association are helpful for advice.
- Don't prop babies with bottles to feed themselves, nurse them instead.
- It is important to sterilise bottles, breast pumps and dummies. This can be done with a sterilising solution or by boiling. In general, germs and bacteria won't survive on clean dry surfaces. Do not attempt to clean baby's dummies by sucking them.
- Be careful when heating milk and food in microwaves as microwaves can overheat to dangerously high temperatures. Always stir and test the temperature of the milk or food before giving it to a baby.



### Cots

All new and second-hand cots sold in Australia must comply with the Australian Standard (AS2172). When purchasing a cot look for the Australian Standard symbol. Ensure that the spacing between the bars of cots is between 50mm and 85mm and the depth of the cot is a minimum of 600mm.

A firm, well fitting mattress providing even support is recommended. The gap between the mattress and the sides and ends of the cot should be minimal, less than 2cm. Make sure there is nothing sticking out anywhere on the cot that a child could catch clothing on or any cords hanging nearby that a child could become tangled with.

The simpler the design and less cluttered the inside of the cot the better. Avoid unnecessary ties, ribbons, cot bumpers and pillows.

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## SIDS

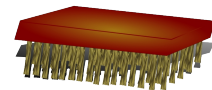
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), or cot death, is the 'sudden death of an infant which is unexplained'. There are a number of different factors involved in cot death. The incidence of SIDS can be reduced if parents and carers of children follow current recommendations.

- Babies should be placed to sleep on their backs.
- To avoid the baby's head becoming covered, position the baby so that its feet are close to or touching the end of the cot.
- Bedrooms in which babies sleep should be at a temperature which is comfortable (16-20o C).
- Exposure of babies to tobacco smoke during pregnancy and after birth increases the risk of SIDS.
- Rather than sleeping with your baby, if you want your baby to sleep near you place him or her in a cot beside your bed.

## Hygiene

It is important to be hygienic with a new baby in the home. Young babies are affected by germs and bacteria as their immune system is still in the developing stages.

- Wash hands thoroughly with warm water and soap after changing dirty nappies and before preparing food or feeding babies.
- It is a good idea to bath or wipe the baby after nappy changes. It keeps the baby fresh and is relaxing.
- Nappies need to be clean and dry. Soak nappies in an anti-bacterial solution or use part vinegar and part bicarbonate of soda.
- Choose a nappy bucket with a tight fitting lid and store out of reach of children.
- Keep baby's rattles and toys clean and dry.



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