



For more information on safe sleep tips,  
call Syracuse Healthy Start at 435-2000.

Joanne M. Mahoney  
County Executive



Cynthia B. Morrow, MD, MPH  
Commissioner of Health

[www.ongov.net](http://www.ongov.net)

# Are Bumper Pads Safe?

## Use of Bumper Pads

Before crib safety standards were set, bumper pads were used to protect babies from having their heads trapped between the wide-spaced slats of a crib.

Today, cribs must meet crib safety standards and slats must be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart (about the width of a soda can), which prevents a baby's head from being trapped.

A recent study showed that using bumper pads is more dangerous to a baby than not using them - bumper pads do not do any good. It is recommended that parents do not use bumper pads in cribs or bassinets.

## Why are Bumper Pads Dangerous?

Most babies lack the motor skills needed to free themselves from a dangerous situation involving bumper pads. For example:

- A baby's mouth and nose can become pressed up against a bumper and a baby can suffocate from re-breathing their exhaled air instead of fresh air
- A baby can become wedged between the bumper pad and another surface and suffocate
- Babies can be strangled from a loose bumper tie

## Safe Sleep Tips For Baby

- Babies should always sleep on their backs.
- Cribs are the safest place for babies to sleep whether babies are breast fed or bottle fed when they:
  - meet current safety standards
  - have a firm mattress that fits snug in the crib
  - do not have any blankets, stuffed animals, pillows or bumper pads in them
- Do not smoke around your baby. Secondhand smoke and smoking while pregnant affect the normal breathing of an infant.
- Never sleep in a bed or on a couch with your baby.
- Use a sleeper or layer clothing instead of using a blanket in baby's crib.
- Never put your baby to sleep on:
  - Couches
  - Adult beds
  - Air mattresses
  - Waterbeds
  - Recliners
  - Pillows
  - Beanbag chairs
  - Cribs with mattresses that don't properly fit
  - Heavy blankets, comforters or other soft surfaces

