



AAP News Parent Plus

INFORMATION FROM YOUR PEDIATRICIAN

Safe and sound: tips for using infant swings

Infant swings can be a valuable asset when parents need help soothing a fussy baby or a safe place for their child while they catch up on housework.

When using infant swings, parents should ensure they meet the latest safety standards. New voluntary government rules will be in effect starting in May. The safety rules were developed to protect infants after more than 350 swing-related incidents were reported between 2009 and 2012, including two infant deaths and 24 injuries. Many swings already meet these standards, but older baby equipment may not.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) advises parents against using infant swings for sleeping babies. Parents also should limit the amount of waking time that their baby spends in a seat such as an infant swing, bouncy seat, car seat or carrier to prevent the baby's still-soft head from becoming flat as a result of being in the same position for too long.

The following tips can help keep babies safe when in infant swings:

- Infants under age 4 months should be seated in the most reclined swing position to avoid slumping over and suffocating.
- The swing should not tip over or fold up easily.
- If the seat can be adjusted to more than a 50-degree angle, it should have shoulder straps to keep the infant from falling out.

- Toys on mobiles attached to the swings should not be pulled off easily.
- Caregivers should make sure the baby is not heavier than weight limits specified on the swing label or instructions.
- The swing's cradle surface should stay fairly flat while in motion and while stopped so the infant will not tip or fall out.



If the baby falls asleep in a swing, car seat or bouncy seat, the AAP advises caregivers to move the child to a firm sleep surface as soon as possible.

The AAP also recommends tummy time for all infants, starting the day they arrive home from the hospital. Babies should be put on their stomachs while awake for three to five minutes at a time two to three times a day and building up. Babies should be watched during tummy time.

For more details on the infant swing guidelines, go to <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSC/PUB/PREREL/prhtml13/13037.html>.

— Trisha Koriath

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