



# PARENTING POINTERS

## Importance of Sleep

Sleep is **important** for healthy development. Newborns sleep most of the day, but do enjoy play times with mom and/or dad. Sleeping routines are important for babies and parents. Consider the following tips:

- Always put your baby on his/her **back** for sleeping. (Scientists think this position prevents *Sudden Infant Death Syndrome*.)
- Never leave your baby in bed with a bottle. (Choking and dental problems can occur.)
- Make the hour or two **before bedtime** the time for feeding, bathing, and playing.
- At night the house should quiet down. This will signal baby to relax and sleep.
- Gentle music can be soothing for babies.
- Do not always rock or hold your baby until he/she falls asleep. Learning to soothe and fall asleep on his/her own is important for the future.
- Grab sleep for yourself whenever baby is sleeping so you can combat fatigue.
- Naps are important for babies and mummies. Newborns may need three or more naps each day. As baby grows the naps will decrease in number and duration. Look for signs of fatigue such as rubbing eyes, crankiness, yawning, and shutting eyes.

**Resources:** *Healthy Start, Grow Smart*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Agriculture; *Guide to Baby & Child Care*, JoAnna Moorhead; National Sleep Foundation

Reviewed by the Baby Peaches Advisory Board: Sonya Cruel, Grady's First Steps; Tiffany Fell, CDC; Ann Hersom, Mother of 3; Rich Klein, Administrative Judge; Sue Markle, Pediatric Occupational Therapist; Delee Rehak, CBO Concentra; Ginny Weber, Atlanta Med. Ctr. Neonatal Nurse