

SLEEPING/Mattresses

Overview

For sleeping, the crib and mattress are the biggest investments you'll make, and aside from a fitted sheet, the only things you'll actually need for your baby, from newborn to toddler. Recent safety advice advocates no co-sleeping, and sleeping in the same room as your baby for at least the first six months.

HIDDEN HAZARDS

Mattresses can be made with a wide variety of materials. All must meet flammability standards and withstand an open flame for a period of time. Preventing fire can be achieved with a non-toxic barrier material (the most benign being wool; kevlar is another option), or by adding **flame retardant** chemicals to foam/latex. Many people seek waterproof mattresses and as a result, coverings can be made of **polyvinyl chloride** (with softeners including some phthalates) or can be coated with per- or polyfluoro alkyl substances (**PFAS**). Mattress surfaces may also be treated with **antimicrobial** chemicals. Inside, mattresses may be made with a variety of pads, some of which may include other chemicals of concern including **solvents**.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Now that drop-side cribs should no longer be used, heavy mattresses can be more challenging to change. However, traditional metal-coil mattresses can be the least dependent on petroleum chemicals, and can more easily meet flammability standards without use of flame retardant chemicals. If you are choosing a foam mattress, beware of green claims for "soy-based foam" which is not made with a significant portion of soybean

oil. Such foams are still polyurethane, and still are made with carcinogens.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Getting Ready for Baby campaign specifically recommends products that have been certified [MADE SAFE](#). For crib mattresses, this includes:

- Happsy organic baby crib mattress (\$199 at [mfgr website](#))
- Lullaby Earth Breeze breathable crib mattress (\$279 at [mfgr website](#))
- Lullaby Earth Healthy Support crib mattress (\$169 at [mfgr website](#))
- Naturpedic baby crib mattresses (all) (\$259-\$399 at [mfgr website](#))

Aside from these specific recommendations, we recommend looking for mattresses made without flame retardant chemicals, polyvinyl chloride, antimicrobial additives, per- and polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS - this includes PFCs). There is no evidence that "soy foam" offers any environmental or health benefit versus polyurethane foam, which we also recommend avoiding.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Learn more about the hidden hazards by reviewing the [glossary](#) or dive in deep by reading [Safer Products for Babies and Toddlers: Resources and Recommendations for Retailers](#).

Learn more about how mattresses are made (and what they were made of in 2011) in [The Mattress Matters](#).