

Safe infant sleep practices suboptimal across the U.S.

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(HealthDay)—Safe infant sleep practices are suboptimal in the United

States, according to a study published online Oct. 21 in *Pediatrics*.

Ashley H. Hirai, Ph.D., from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau in Rockville, Maryland, and colleagues used 2016 Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System data from 29 states to examine maternal report of four safe sleep practices: back sleep position, separate approved sleep surface, room sharing without bed sharing, and no soft objects or loose bedding. The authors also examined maternal report of receipt of health care provider [advice](#) relating to these practices.

The researchers found that 78.0, 57.1, 42.4, and 31.8 percent of mothers reported usually placing their infants to sleep on their backs, room sharing without bed sharing, avoiding soft bedding, and using a separate approved sleep surface, respectively. Reported receipt of provider advice varied from 48.8 to 92.6 percent for room sharing without bed sharing and back sleep position, respectively. Larger differences by sociodemographic, behavioral, and [health](#) care characteristics were seen for safe sleep practices versus [receipt](#) of advice (about 10 to 20 versus about 5 to 10 percentage points). Receipt of provider advice correlated with increased use of safe sleep practices, ranging from 12 to 28 percent for room sharing without bed sharing and back sleep positions, respectively. State-level differences in safe sleep practices varied by 20 to 25 percentage points.

"Safe sleep practices, especially those other than back sleep [position](#), are suboptimal, with demographic and state-level differences indicating improvement opportunities," the authors write.

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