Safe kids ☺ Healthy kids ☺ Happy kids

Is Baby-Wearing Safe?

Many parents use front carriers or slings to carry their baby. It is called baby wearing. Holding their baby close to their body can promote bonding and soothe a fussy baby. However, parents need to choose infant carriers and slings with care.

The Consumer Product and Safety Commission (CPSC) issued a warning for sling style carriers. Slings pose a risk of suffocation to infants less than 4 months of age. Also, low birth weight babies, premature babies, babies with breathing problems and babies with colds are at-risk.

Slings can injure or kill. Infants can suffocate in a minute or two:

1. The fabric can press against the infant's nose and mouth. This blocks her breathing.
2. In a curved or C-position, his chin bends toward his chest. This can restrict his ability to breathe. He will not be able to cry for help and will slowly suffocate.

Other sling-related injuries include skull fractures, broken bones and serious bruises from falls and bumps.

Safety must always be a parent's priority. What can you do to keep your baby safe in a carrier or sling?

What should parents avoid doing when using a carrier or sling?

- Do not allow his chin to rest on his chest. He must be able to breathe.
- Do not cover her head and face with fabric.
- Never carry loose items in your carrier with your baby.
- Do not perform outside and household chores like mowing the lawn or cleaning.
- Do not cook. She is at risk for burns.
- Never use a baby carrier while riding in a car.
- Do not use a carrier when you walk on ice.

- Research before you buy. Look for wide, adjustable shoulder straps. All belts and straps must be durable and support and hold your baby.
- Find a carrier that is comfortable for you and your baby.
- Read and follow the instructions. Practice with a doll.
- Make sure he can breathe. Check him often.
- Inspect the seams, straps, buckles and fasteners often.
- Wear sturdy shoes to prevent falls and bumps.
- Dress her in light clothing in the summer. Prevent overheating and sun burn.
- Keep him warm in the winter.

Baby wearing can be positive for both baby and parent. Follow these tips to be sure it is also safe!

For more information, log on to cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prhtml10/10165.html or babycenter.com

Brought to you by Parent Help Line and St. John's Children's Hospital