Swaddling can be harmful if done incorrectly

Let us show you the correct way to do it
Swaddling is the practice of wrapping your baby in a blanket or cloth. It mimics the comfort of the womb. Swaddling can soothe crying and restlessness if done correctly. It can also promote longer sleep and regular sleep patterns.

Swaddling can have many advantages if done correctly. You need to leave space in the blanket for the baby’s hips and legs to move. If done incorrectly, it can put too much pressure on the hips and cause problems. An extreme example includes hip dysplasia or dislocation of the hips. Hip dysplasia is a term used to describe a wide range of hip problems, such as a misshapen ball or socket or a loose hip joint.

**How you can swaddle correctly**

1. Lay a blanket on a flat surface in the shape of a diamond. Then fold the top corner down to make a straight edge.

2. Place your baby on the blanket with her shoulders even with the top edge.
3. Place your baby’s arms together on her chest under her chin.

4. Wrap one side of the blanket over her chest. Then tuck the blanket under the side of your baby.

5. Then do the same on the other side. Wrap the side of the blanket over her chest. Then tuck the blanket under the side of your baby.
6. Twist or fold the bottom corner of the blanket and tuck it under your baby. Make sure to leave room for her legs and hips to move up and out.

**Tips**
- Always place your baby on her back to sleep.
- Stop swaddling when she starts to break out of the swaddle or starts to roll over.
Things that can help you swaddle

You may choose to use blankets designed for swaddling babies. These are often called swaddling blankets or sleep sacks. When using these, it is still important to make sure there is room for your baby's hips to move and grow.

How we can help

At Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, we have experience treating hip conditions in infants, adolescents and young adults. Our Hip Program provides a wide range of services for children who need specialized medical and surgical care. Our approach to early diagnosis and treatment allows patients to return to healthier lives.

Visit choa.org/swaddling for more information and to watch an instructional video on how to swaddle.

Call 404-785-HIPS (4477) or visit choa.org/hip for more information about our Hip Program.