



UNITED STATES
CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
4330 EAST WEST HIGHWAY
BETHESDA, MD 20814

COMMISSIONER RICH TRUMKA JR.

CPSC PROPOSES COMMONSENSE NEW RULE TO STOP A PATTERN OF INFANT DEATHS IN NURSING PILLOWS

SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

The Commission voted unanimously and with bipartisan support on a proposal to stop a pattern of infant deaths in nursing pillows. This proposed rule was designed to preserve the useful function of nursing pillows—allowing caregivers to comfortably feed babies—while eliminating their hazardous use for sleep. This proposed rule on nursing pillows is the next step in the march towards eliminating preventable infant sleep deaths, and I look forward to seeing a final rule soon.

Between 2010 and 2022, at least 154 infants died when put to sleep in a nursing pillow.¹ The proposed rule addresses the elements of nursing pillows that appear to pose a risk of injury and death to infants, based on an analysis of infant deaths in nursing pillows.²

Nursing pillows are NOT safe for sleep. These products can pose a risk of suffocation due to their plush, pillowy nature. Infants placed in nursing pillows while *not* in a caregiver's lap are also at an increased risk of positional asphyxia, including neck hyperextension or hyperflexion, when an infant's position shifts so that their head falls against their chest or tilts backwards over the top of the pillow. When propped on an angled, pillowy surface, young babies have been reported to scoot or roll themselves into unsafe positions at an earlier age than might otherwise be developmentally possible.

Parents and caregivers: NEVER put your child to sleep on a soft, pillowy surface like a nursing pillow. Only a firm, flat surface is safe for sleep.

¹ Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: Safety Standard for Nursing Pillows, at page OS-14 (available at: <https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Notice-of-Proposed-Rulemaking-Safety-Standard-for-Nursing-Pillows.pdf?VersionId=kq4qN.5uTjM6VuaN2015ky8bIKGYii3P>) (Aug. 2023).

² Erin M. Mannen, Ph. D., et al., "Pillows Product Characterization and Testing" (available at: https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Pillows-Product-Characterization-and-Testing-Final-Report-with-CPSC-Staff-Statement.pdf?VersionId=omVlmybShqzcQM4GQzepWSlz.s_iOxNC) (June 2022).