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*Helping Sleepy Angels Get Their Rest!*

### TIPS FOR BETTER HOLIDAY SLEEP!

Holidays are amazing and full of excitement! Whether you are travelling or staying at home, many little ones will have sleep disturbances from the excitement and/or changes to their routines. Here are a few tips to help the whole family enjoy this wonderful holiday season:

1. Follow your little ones' sleepy cues for knowing when you need to put them down for a nap or bedtime. You will see that you are working with their little bodies and this is the best chance that you will have to get them to sleep. Well-rested children have better behavior and are more adaptable to variations in their routine.
2. When staying away from home for several days - keep your schedule, nap/bedtime routine, and reactions to any night-wake-ups as consistent and as similar to at home as possible. Little ones don't like change but will quickly adapt to new surroundings with predictability from Mom and Dad AND consistency. You will have a couple of days of adjustment at the start followed by a happier and more relaxing holiday.
  - a) Take as many familiar sleep associations with you as possible (loveys, books, white noise machines, special blankets, and even your own crib sheets, etc.); this will help with easing the transition to a new environment.
3. Travelling during naptime may help get in more sleep; it is a light sleep but it is better than no sleep and will help with everyone's sleep that night.
4. Time Zone changes:
  - a) keep your current time zone and put to sleep at the same times as usual (different time on clock where you are). Example: nap is at 1pm MST, you are in Toronto so that would be 3pm
  - b) adjust to the new time zone
    - you may need to give an extra nap to bridge the gap
    - travel times may help with naps – depending on how much sleep happens on the plane or travelling to your accommodations
    - EXPECT 2-3 days to adjust to the changes of the new place and the new timing
5. Toddlers: explain the expectations for sleep when you are somewhere new (sleeping in the same room, co-sleeping, etc.) and that everything will return to normal when you go home. They can understand more than we think.
6. Do NOT worry if you stray from your routine or break some rules; simply return to your regular routine as quickly as possible. Do your best to avoid old habits and in not creating any new negative associations to sleep ('crutches').
7. Take all opportunities that you find to take a breath and enjoy! Holidays are hectic and full of family and friends who would love to take the baby or spoil your toddler. They may not get him/her to sleep the 'right' way but it is only a 'hiccup' in the routine.



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You may meet some resistance to getting back into the swing of things after the holidays or when you return home. This is because babies/children do NOT like change and are letting you know that they realize this is home but it is different than last night. Little ones are very smart and will try their best to hold onto any new sleep associations that they have learned and may prefer. Be patient and be consistent as you return to your regular daily routine and you will see they return to their regular schedule within a few days.

I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year!

[www.soothingangels.ca](http://www.soothingangels.ca)

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