

Consumer Product Safety Alert

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

Infant Cushions Are Banned

In 1992, the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) banned infant cushions that were involved in 36 infant suffocations. The Commission took action previously to remove existing products from the marketplace and from consumers.

The CPSC's action stemmed from the concern that other manufacturers might begin production of the same or similar products. A ban of infant cushions can assure that this product does not reappear into the marketplace.

There are five essential features that define the infant cushions of concern. The cushions:

- have soft fabric coverings;
- are loosely fitted with a granular material such as plastic foam beads or pellets;
- are easily flattened to create a nest so that the infant lies prone on them;
- are capable of conforming to the face or body of an infant; and

- are intended or promoted for use by children under one year of age.

Of these features, the key characteristic that probably contributes most to deaths is the ability of the cushions to conform to an infant's face or body.

Almost all of the incidents reported to CPSC involved children lying in a prone, stomach down position. In all but two of the incidents, the infant was less than four months old.

In addition to having published a rule to ban production of infant cushions, the CPSC urges consumers who may still have infant cushions to destroy them immediately.

A death that occurred two years after the initial recall announcement underscores that infant cushions not destroyed may find their way back into infant use at a later date.

