

Parents, carers and professionals can reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome by following the advice below to create a safe sleeping environment for babies and toddlers. It's important to follow safe-sleep advice for sleeping in the daytime and when you're away from home.



- The safest place for babies to sleep is on their back, in a cot, in their parents' room for the first six months (but not in the same bed).
- It is unsafe for adults, children or pets to share a sleeping area with your baby.
- Adults sharing a bed with a baby can accidentally roll too close or onto a baby whilst asleep. There is a higher risk of this occurring if you have taken medication, alcohol or are excessively tired. Co-sleeping is also linked to an increased risk of SIDS if a baby was born prematurely or was of low birth-weight (under 2.5kgs).
- Adult beds, sofas and armchairs are not safe for sleeping babies. Never sleep on a sofa or armchair with your baby.
- Soft bedding such as pillows, quilts and duvets increase your baby's risk of SUDI and suffocation.
- Soft toys and other objects such as cot bumpers and sleep positioners should also not be placed in cots – a clear cot is a safe cot. Use a firm, waterproof, well-fitting mattress in good condition. Make sure any covers are tucked in, reaching no higher than the baby's chest so that they do not slip over the baby's head.
- Keep baby's head uncovered and place your baby on their back in the 'feet to foot' position. A baby sleeping on their front or side greatly increases the chance of SIDS.
- Overheating can increase the risk of death while your baby is sleeping. Babies can overheat due to too much bedding or if the room is too hot. Use lightweight blankets. If you fold a blanket in half, it counts as two blankets.
- Babies do not need hot rooms and it is rare for their room to need to be heated all night. The room temperatures should be between 16c and 20c.
- Don't worry if your baby's hands feel cold. This is normal. Check their tummy and if it feels hot remove some of the bedding.



- Do not smoke in pregnancy or in the same room as your baby. Smoking by either parent during pregnancy greatly increases the risk of sudden infant death. Newborn babies are at increased risk of SIDS if they are exposed to cigarette smoke. Do not let anyone smoke in the same space as your baby. For help and advice to stop smoking, try the NHS Smoking Helpline on 0800 0224 332 or visit the website <http://smokefree.nhs.uk/>
- Breast feed your baby if you can. Breastfeeding has been associated with a lower SIDS rate. Help and support with breastfeeding can be accessed by visiting the following website:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/breastfeeding-help-support.aspx#close>

**The Lullaby Trust** are a charity that provides specialist support for bereaved families, promotes expert advice on safer baby sleep and raises awareness on sudden infant death. For further information or advice please visit their website <http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/> or call their information line on 0808 802 6869.

**Unicef** also provides helpful leaflets for parents and accompanying guide for professionals on caring for your baby at night. These can be downloaded here: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/leaflets-and-posters/caring-for-your-baby-at-night/>