# Advice for Grandparents, Relatives and Friends on Safer Sleeping for Babies

The safest place for a baby to sleep, under the age of one year, is in a cot, crib or Moses basket

Hertfordshire Community NHS
NHS Trust

HERTFORDSHIRE
safeguardingchildren
PARTNERSHIP

## Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants (SUDI) is the sudden and unexpected death of a baby

This is more likely to occur when a baby has slept on a sofa, chair, or bed with an adult, and can occur at any time of the day or night. This is referred to as co-sleeping. Co-sleeping will increase the risk of a baby overheating. It is recommended that babies sleep in their own crib/Moses basket/cot.

## How to be safe when looking after baby

In the UK, around 230 babies die each year because of SUDI– that is over four babies every week, according to the Lullaby Trust.

Babies placed on their front to sleep or nap are six times more at risk of SUDI than those placed on their back. In the early 1990's advice changed to say that babies should be put to sleep on their back, never their front. When you had babies, you may have placed babies on their front or their side to sleep – that was the advice at the time, but things have changed and we now know more about how to keep babies safe.

Since the launch of the Back to Sleep campaign, the rate of SUDI has fallen by 81%. Never place babies on their front to sleep. Help baby develop by allowing them plenty of 'tummy time' when they are awake and someone is present to watch them.

## Top tips to help keep baby safe

It is particularly recommended that you **DO NOT** co-sleep with baby if:

**You or your partner smoke**

**You or your partner have consumed alcohol or drugs (including any prescribed medication that makes you drowsy)**

**Baby was born at a low birth weight (below 2.5kg or 5.5lbs)**

**Baby was born prematurely (before 37 weeks)**

## DO

**DO** place baby to sleep in a separate cot/crib or Moses basket - for all sleep, including naps and keep your home smoke-free.

**DO** place baby on their back to sleep, with baby's feet at the bottom of the cot/crib/ Moses basket.

**DO** use a new, firm, well-fitted mattress with fitted sheet. No toys or loose blankets in the cot.

**DO** keep the room temperature between 16-20C. Keep baby's crib/ Moses basket/cot away from the window and radiator.

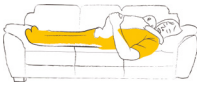
**16-20C**

**DO** take baby out of the car seat once the travel has taken place. They're not flat and can be a risk.

**DO** put baby in a cot/ crib or Moses basket beside your bed at night for the first 6 months.

## DO NOT

**DO NOT** fall asleep while feeding, or co-sleeping with baby on a sofa, an arm chair a bed.



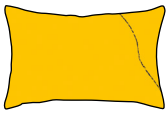
**DO NOT** co-sleep if you or your partner smoke, drink alcohol or take drugs (legal or illegal), or any medication that makes you drowsy.

**DO NOT** cover baby's face or head whilst sleeping.

**DO NOT** let baby get too hot by leaving baby in their car seat/sling and/or their outdoor clothing or swaddle with a shawl when they are inside.

**DO NOT** smoke, take drugs or alcohol or anything that makes you drowsy whilst you are with your baby.

**DO NOT** use bumpers, pillows, duvets, shawls and other sleeping accessories where baby sleeps.



Co-sleeping should also be avoided if you are excessively tired, as this may increase the chance of accidents e.g. baby rolling, falling or getting trapped between the bed/mattress/wall.

## If a baby in your care shows signs of being unwell you should seek medical advice.

Do not give any medicine to your baby under the age of 3 months unless

**For more information please discuss this with a GP, Midwife or Health Visitor.**

Remember that Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants is rare but **DO** share this information with anyone caring for baby. Following this advice reduces the risk even further. For more information **www.lullabytrust.org.uk**

**Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust**
**www.hct.nhs.uk**

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