



Safer sleep for baby



6 steps to safer sleeping

**What should
my baby wear
at night?**

**Bed sharing – everything
you need to know**
**Advice on giving
up smoking**

Sleepless nights and caring for your baby



Welcome to 'safer sleep for baby'

This booklet has been put together to help you keep your baby safe as they sleep. Having the right information and understanding the risks can help you to do this.

Each year 290 babies will die unexpectedly before their first birthday. Many of these deaths are classified as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or cot death, which usually happens when babies are sleeping.

No-one wants to think about this happening to their baby and we don't want you to spend this special time worrying.

Our six steps on the opposite page are an easy and quick way to get started. You can follow them whenever you put your baby down to sleep to reduce the risks.

We've also got practical tips, frequently asked questions and much more.

However we know that every baby is different and if you have any questions or worries see the back page for a list of people who can help you.

We hope you find the booklet useful, here's to safer sleep for baby and sweeter dreams for you!





Follow our six steps



1

Keep baby away from smoke, before and after birth.

2

Put baby in a cot, crib or Moses basket to sleep - never fall asleep with them on a sofa or chair.

3

Never fall asleep with baby after drinking or taking drugs/medication.

4

Put baby to sleep on their back with their feet to the foot of the cot.

5

Keep baby's head and face uncovered and make sure they don't get too hot.

6

Breastfeed your baby - support is available if you need it.



Babies should sleep in the same room as the adult who is caring for them for the first six months of life.

Together we can reduce the number of babies dying unexpectedly in Lancashire each year.



Find out more at www.lancashire.gov.uk and search 'safer sleep for baby'



Benefits of breastfeeding



Breastfeeding your baby reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.

Exclusive breastfeeding is the best way of feeding babies under six months of age. After that they should receive complementary foods with continued breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding has lots of health benefits for your baby, and for mum too.

- Breastfeeding helps to protect your baby from infections and diseases.
- It is also free and available whenever and wherever your baby needs a feed – so no scrambling around making up bottles in the middle of the night!

Getting breastfeeding started

There will be lots of support for you as you begin to breastfeed. Speak to your midwife, health visitor, peer supporter, local infant feeding team or local children's centre to find out what is going on in your area. You can also call the national breastfeeding helpline on **0300 100 0212**.

Getting out and about...

Breastfeeding doesn't mean you need to be stuck indoors, even if you are worried about feeding in public. Many places including shopping centres, cafes and children's centres have breastfeeding rooms or quiet places where you can feed your baby.



Did you know...
You can burn up to 500 calories a day by breastfeeding!



Once you've got the hang of breastfeeding it's easy to feed wherever you are, and most people won't even notice. Many mums find wearing a camisole/vest top under a t-shirt is really practical. Or you can use a scarf over your shoulder.

Why not practice at home in front of a mirror to reassure yourself how little anyone can see?

Worried about lack of sleep?

If you're tempted to give up breastfeeding because your baby is waking often in the night REMEMBER... it won't last forever and you will sleep again. Even babies who are formula fed will need care and attention during the night. Babies have small stomachs and are growing very

quickly so it is normal for them to wake in the night.

If you decide to bed-share so that you can breastfeed lying down, see page 9 for how you can do this as safely as possible.

It is also normal to feel tired and you need to take care of yourself. Nap when baby sleeps and remember to drink plenty of water and eat well.

Ask for help if you need it and remember you are doing an amazing job feeding your baby!

Smoking

Quitting smoking is one of the most positive and rewarding achievements you can do when pregnant and after you have had your baby.

Even if you or your partner smoke in a different room to your baby, the risk of your baby dying unexpectedly increases.

The key to giving up for good is to get support from your family, friends and professionals.

**Smoking
increases the
risk of your
baby dying
unexpectedly**

You will have a specialist stop smoking service in your area that will be able to inform, advise and support you. If you contact **www.smokefree.nhs.uk** they will do a postcode search for stop smoking services in your area.

Giving up will help to improve the health of you and your baby... Plus just think of all the money you would save – why not use some of it to reward yourself for giving up!

What should baby sleep in?



Over-heating can increase the risk of your baby dying.

The room they sleep in should be between 16-20 °C. If it's too hot you can turn down the heating or open the window during the day.

To check if your baby is too warm, the best place to feel is on their stomachs. Don't worry if baby's hands or feet feel cool, this is normal.

If they are too warm remove a layer of clothing and/or bedding.

What should baby wear?

What your baby should wear will depend on two things:

- The temperature of the room
- What bedding you have for your baby

Your baby should never wear a hat while they are asleep inside. Remember to remove warm clothing and hats when you come in from outside, even if this means waking your baby.





Baby's bedding

Use sheets, lightweight blankets or a baby sleep bag. Take off a layer if baby is too warm.

Remember that if you fold a blanket or sheet this is a double layer.

Baby sleep bags come in various togs and each one should have a label that says when it is best to use it.

Don't use pillows and duvets as they increase the risk of suffocation and over-heating.

Co-sleeping?

If you share a bed with your baby use lightweight bedding and make sure it doesn't completely cover them. Don't use a baby sleep bag as well as your bedding as this could lead to them over-heating.

If you are unsure of anything speak to your health visitor.

See page
9 for more
info on
co-sleeping

Sleeping tips



Sleepless nights and caring for a baby can be hard but getting the right information from Health Professionals and talking to other parents can help. Here are some ideas from people who know what you are going through...



Even though I'm not the best singer, Thomas loves lullabies and I find they really help to settle him when he wakes in the night.

Andy and Thomas



If Bella keeps me up in the night I make sure I nap during the day when she does, the cleaning can wait!

Emma and Bella



When I'm up feeding my baby in the night I put on a night light and read a magazine to help stop me from falling asleep.

Shaghafta and Muhammad Eesa



When my grandson stays over for the night I make sure I stick to his routine; quiet time, bath, book and then into his cot in our room. Doing this means he (usually) goes to sleep just like he would at home.

Steve and William



Bed sharing



Some parents choose to sleep in a bed with their baby, perhaps because they are breastfeeding or to provide reassurance. Whatever your reason for bed sharing there are some important things to remember:

What you can do

- Make sure the mattress is clean, firm and flat.
- Sleep facing baby - this helps to stop the baby moving up or down the bed and reduces the chances of you rolling onto them.
- Make sure that baby can't fall out of bed or get stuck between the mattress and the wall - the best place for them to sleep is next to mum or dad, away from pillows.
- If there will be another adult or older sibling in the bed it is best to position yourself between the other adult/older sibling and your baby.
- If you bring baby into the bed during the night wake anyone else in the bed to let them know what you are doing to help stop them accidentally rolling on to baby.
- Make sure the bedding doesn't cover your baby's face or head – don't let them sleep under a duvet or with pillows. Instead use lightweight blankets or sheets.



There are things we know increase the risk of baby dying in their sleep.

Never share a bed with your baby if you have recently drunk alcohol or taken drugs (legal or illegal) as this makes you less responsive.

Don't use waterbeds, electric blankets or bean bags.

Never leave your baby alone in the bed as they are at risk of falling out or wriggling into a dangerous position.

Don't share a bed with your baby if you or your partner smoke as this increases the risk of them dying.

Avoid having pets or cuddly toys in the bed.

Frequently asked questions

Q

I'm struggling to get my baby's room to the right temperature because it always seems too hot what can I do?

**A**

The ideal temperature for a baby's room is between 16 - 20°C but if you can't get the temperature exactly between these, don't worry. Just make sure you dress baby in the appropriate sleep wear and remove or add layers of bedding dependant on whether the room is too hot or too cold. See our guide on pages 6 & 7 to find out more.

**Q**

If my baby won't settle without me, is it a good idea to let them sleep in my bed?

**A**

The safest place for your baby to sleep is in their cot, crib or Moses basket in your room with you for the first 6 months. Try moving where they sleep next to your bed as this may reassure them that you are near. If you have a partner ask for their help, perhaps take it in turns to care for baby while the other sleeps. There may be times when your baby remains unsettled. Placing your baby skin to skin with you and gently rocking can provide comfort.

Make sure you and your partner do not put yourselves in a position where you could fall asleep with your baby on a sofa or armchair. (see page 9)



**Q**

I've heard that babies sleep safest on their backs, what do I do if my baby doesn't like it?

**A**

The safest position for your baby to sleep in is on their back, so keep trying. There may be other reasons behind them being uncomfortable in this position, for example if they have a cold. Your health visitor or GP will be able to advise you on ways you can help with this.

Don't worry too much if your baby moves onto their side on their own. Once they are strong enough to roll off their back onto their front you are fine to leave them this way.

**Q**

I only smoke a few cigarettes a day and I always go outside the house, surely this won't harm my baby?

**A**

Smoke will stay on your clothes and chemicals continue to come out in your breath and skin for hours after you have smoked a cigarette, so the only way to protect your baby is to give up altogether. We know this can be easier said than done so we've put together some advice on page 5.



Remember all babies, and parents, are different and if you have any questions or concerns it is always best to speak to a professional who will be able to help you by listening to your individual situation.

My useful numbers

Midwife: _____

Health visitor: _____

G.P. _____

Breastfeeding support:

Children's Centre (contact the Family Information Service on
08001950137 if you are unsure where this is):

Other Contacts: _____



For more information about the Safer Sleep for Baby campaign visit
www.lancashire.gov.uk and search 'safer sleep for baby'



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