

# Safe sleeping for your baby at all times

Supporting parents and carers to make informed decisions to keep babies safe

The safest place for a baby to sleep for the first six months is on their back, in a separate cot or Moses basket, in the same room as you



# Did you know...?

Nationally, over 300 babies a year die suddenly and unexpectedly. Northamptonshire is above the national average for babies who die suddenly and unexpectedly (*based on figures December 2014 – May 2015*).

## Risks are further increased if you or your partner:

- Are smokers (no matter where or when you smoke and even if you never smoke in bed)
- Have recently drunk alcohol
- Have taken medication or drugs that make you sleep more heavily
- Feel very tired

## Babies are not able to move their head or lift their head away from danger even if they are not able to breathe.

Babies do not need hot rooms; keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for you at night. About 18°C (65°F).

Refer to the **Red Book** for diagrams on placing baby safely in their cot or Moses basket.

A safe sleep assessment will be undertaken with you by a health professional within the first week of your new baby's life.



## Never fall asleep with a baby on a sofa or armchair. This is one of the most high risk situations for a baby.

- Don't let your baby's head become covered. Covers should be securely tucked in, and reach no higher than the shoulders.
- Always take your baby out of their car seat when the journey is over and remove outdoor clothing once inside, even if it means waking your baby.

## As baby develops:

- Handle with care.
- Its important to understand that rough handling - especially shaking - can seriously injure your baby.
- Babies are fragile, so be gentle, loving and supportive.
- **NEVER SHAKE A BABY.**

## Development of neck muscles:

- A baby's head is big and heavy compared to the rest of its body.
- The neck muscles are not strong enough to hold up and support their head which is why a small babies head tends to flop when not supported.

## When baby learns to roll both ways:

- Don't Panic! You do not need to be up all night putting your baby on their back.
- Baby has developed enough to find its own comfortable sleeping position.

## **At any time, if a baby is unwell, seek medical advice:**

- Your GP
- Out of Hours Service – dial 111

## **Urgent medical attention is needed if your baby:**

- Stops breathing or goes blue
- Is unresponsive and shows no awareness of what is going on
- Has glazed eyes and does not focus on anything
- Cannot be woken
- Has a fit, even if your baby recovers without medical attention.

**DIAL 999 and ask for an ambulance**

Remember: Nationally, infant deaths are rare. By listening to advice we can hopefully reduce risks.

**Working in partnership with Northamptonshire  
Safeguarding Children's Board:**



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