

Reduce the Risks

There are things that we know increase the risks 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



This safer sleeping for baby leaflet is part of a wider range of health and wellbeing information from DISC.

Ask your Support Worker if there are any more health and wellbeing issues that you would like to receive information about.



Health and Wellbeing



Safer Sleeping for Baby



Where to Sleep

For the first six months, your baby should be in the same room as you when they are asleep, in both the day and night.

Put your baby in a cot, crib or Moses basket to sleep. Put baby to sleep on their back with their feet to the foot of the cot. Never fall asleep with them on a sofa or chair.

Sofas, armchairs and make-shift beds such as bean bags are dangerous places, as your baby could easily get trapped, squashed or dropped. There are also risks of your baby overheating.

Some parents choose to share their bed with their baby, but there are risks with doing this. You can roll over in your sleep and suffocate your baby, baby may get caught between the bed and the wall or fall out of the bed.

The next page has tips on what you can do to make bed sharing with your baby safer.

Bed Sharing

If you do choose to share your bed with your baby, there are some important things to remember:

- 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 rolling on to them
- Ensure that baby can't fall out of bed or get stuck between the mattress and wall —baby should sleep next to mum or dad, away from pillows
- If there is another adult or older sibling in the bed, position yourself between the other adult/ sibling and your baby
- If you bring your 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
- Ensure the bedding doesn't cover baby's face or head and don't let them sleep under a duvet. Use lightweight blankets or sheets.

Before Bed Sharing, ask Yourself these Questions:

Do you or your partner EVER smoke?

Have you or your partner recently drunk any alcohol?

Did you smoke in pregnancy?

Have you or your partner taken any medication or drugs that might make you sleep heavily?

Are you excessively tired?

Are you formula feeding your baby?

Was your baby small at birth? (born before 37 weeks or weighing less than 2.5 or 5.5lbs at birth)

If you answered yes to any of these questions then bed sharing is NOT advisable

