

What else can I do to help prevent SIDS?

No Smoking

Your baby's risk of SIDS increases with every cigarette you smoke.

Parents should not smoke during pregnancy or once the baby is born. Do not allow other people to smoke in your baby's environment such as at home or in your car.

Temperature

Overheating can increase baby's risk of cot death. The ideal temperature for their sleep environment is between 16 and 20 degrees Celsius.

Dressing your baby in a nappy, vest and B abygro is enough, with 1 or 2 cellular blankets tucked firmly beneath their shoulders.

When to get medical advice

Seek medical advice from your doctor if your baby seems unwell.

Call 999 immediately if your baby is not responding, stops breathing, turns blue, cannot be woken, or has a seizure.

Tummy time is important for your baby's development but should only take place when the baby is awake and supervised.

Where can I get more information?

- www.hse.ie/safe sleep
- www.sidsireland.ie
- www.firstlight.ie/publications/
- www.healthpromotion.ie/safe sleep for your baby

Please contact your GP, Public Health Nurse or CUH if you have any concerns.

Cork University Hospital: (021) 492 2000



Developed by: Emily Hallissey & Joanna O'Reilly, BSc *Children's and General Integrated Nursing Interns, in consultation with children's nurses from CUH & Clinical Facilitator CUMH*

Date Issued: November 2016

The information in this leaflet is correct at time of development

SAFE SLEEP FOR YOUR BABY

Information for
Parents & Guardians



Children's Services

Safe sleep for your baby

Babies up to 6 months of age can sleep for between 16 and 20 hours a day, so it is important that their sleep environment is a safe one in order to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

What is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome?

SIDS is the sudden unexpected death of an apparently well infant, for which there is no explanation. Although it is often referred to as cot death, it can occur anywhere a baby is sleeping.

Who is at risk?

While 24 babies on average die from SIDS every year in Ireland, it is still very rare and the number of cases have been decreasing in recent years.

All babies are at risk, but it more commonly occurs in:

- Babies exposed to cigarette smoke during and after pregnancy
- Babies who are overheated
- Premature babies
- Male babies

- Babies who sleep with parents, especially when parents have consumed alcohol, drugs or medications



How should I position my baby for sleep?

- Always place your baby on their *back to sleep* at night-time and for naps
- There is no evidence that healthy babies placed on their back are more likely to have serious choking or vomiting episodes
- It is not necessary to reposition older infants over 6 months who roll over by themselves during sleep

- Place baby's feet towards the end of the cot as this reduces the risk of slipping under the blankets. Regularly check that the baby's head is uncovered
- Keep the cot free of soft or fluffy loose objects that may obstruct their airway, like soft toys, pillows or cot bumpers
- Keep your baby's cot in your room for their first six months
- Twins should sleep in separate cots
- Never bring your baby into your own bed or fall asleep with your baby on the sofa. They are at risk of overheating and accidental suffocation
- Studies show that giving your baby a clean dry soother (not attached to a string) is linked to reduced risk of SIDS. However do not force baby to take the soother
- Sometimes babies can get a flat spot at the back of their heads from lying in the same position. Alternate the position of your baby's head between left and right to prevent this