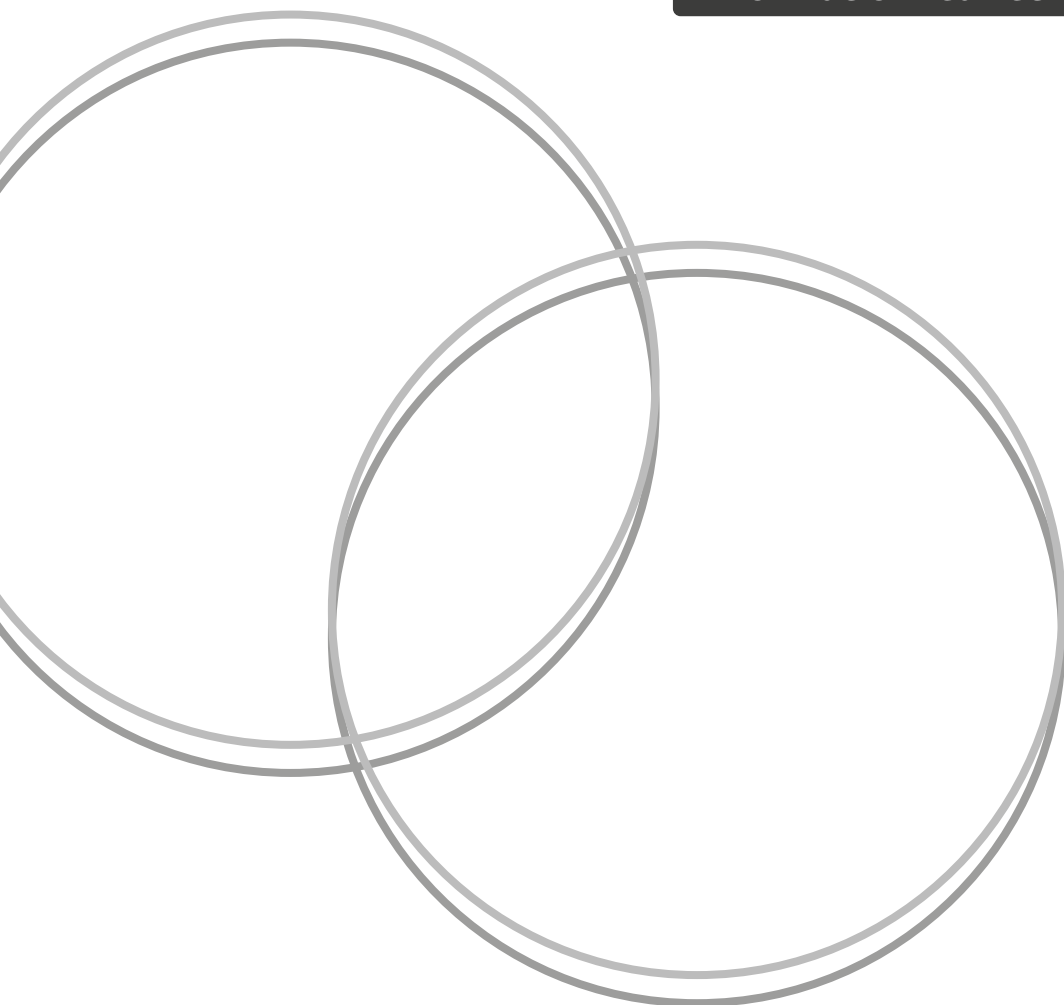


Safer sleep for your baby when you use drugs or substances

Information leaflet



Keeping your baby safe

Everyone wants to keep their baby safe. If you use drugs or substances, including alcohol and cigarettes, it can be harder to keep your baby safe. This leaflet explains what you can do to keep your baby safe when they are sleeping, and how you can reduce their chance of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

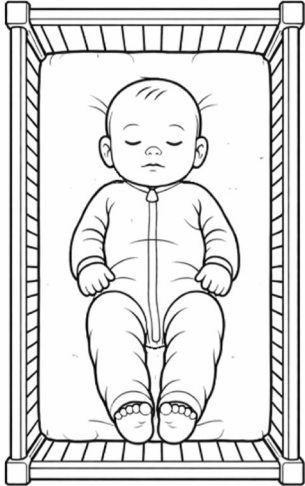
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is a term used when a baby dies suddenly and unexpectedly before their 1st birthday and no cause is ever found. It was previously called cot death.

Although we do not know the cause of SIDS, we do know the chance of SIDS is increased if a parent or carer uses substances. We also know there are positive steps all parents and carers can take to reduce the chance of SIDS.

How can I keep my baby safe when my baby is asleep?

Follow these Safer Sleep steps every time your baby sleeps, day or night, until your baby is 1 year old, to reduce the risk of SIDS.



- Sleep your baby in the same room as you (especially for the first 6 months)
- Keep your baby's sleep space separate from your own sleep space
- Lie your baby on their back
- Keep their sleep space clear (no toys, loose sheets or cot bumpers)
- Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress
- Keep your baby smoke-free
- Avoid your baby getting too hot (keep the room temperature between 16°C and 20°C).

If your baby was born premature, you should talk to your doctor about safer sleep: you may be advised to follow these steps beyond your baby's 1st birthday.

How can I keep my baby safe when I am sleepy?

Caring for a newborn baby can be exhausting. It is easy to fall asleep suddenly and unexpectedly. Falling asleep with your baby is dangerous: you could roll onto, and suffocate, your baby. Whenever you feel tired, always put your baby down using the Safer Sleep steps so they are safe if you fall asleep.

Breastfeeding is tiring. If you breastfeed while lying down, make sure your baby cannot roll onto their front. Once you have finished feeding, if you feel tired, always put your baby down using the Safer Sleep steps.

How can I keep my baby safer when I use drugs or substances?

If you use drugs and substances, including alcohol, your ability to make decisions, judge risk, and respond to your baby will be affected. Some drugs and substances will make you drowsy. To keep your baby as safe as possible, you must make a safety plan, and put it into action, before using any drugs or substances.

- **Always follow the Safer Sleep steps**
- Ask a sober relative or friend to care for your baby.
- Never share a bed with your baby – you could suffocate your baby.

Support for you

We are here to support you. If you want more help or advice about keeping your baby safe, please speak to your midwife, doctor or health visitor.

There is easy to access advice and information about Safer Sleep, including videos, on the Lullaby Trust website.



www.lullabytrust.org.uk/baby-safety

If you want support to recover from, or stop using, drugs and substances you can contact Turning Point (an all-purpose drug and alcohol treatment service), or ask a doctor, midwife or health visitor to make a referral.



www.turning-point.co.uk/services/oxfordshire

If you want support to stop smoking you can contact Smokefree Oxon, or ask a doctor, midwife or health visitor to make a referral.



www.smokefreeoxon.co.uk

NEVER share a bed with your baby if you, or your partner, have:



drunk alcohol



smoked



used drugs



or taken medication that could make you drowsy

If **YOU** feel tired or drowsy, **ALWAYS** put your baby down using the safer sleep steps. **NEVER** put yourself in a situation where you could fall asleep with your baby on a chair or sofa.

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

We would like to thank the Oxfordshire Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership for their contribution in the development of this leaflet.

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