

King's

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King's College Hospital London

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*Information for Parents*

SAFE SLEEPING

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## WHY IS SLEEP POSITION IMPORTANT?

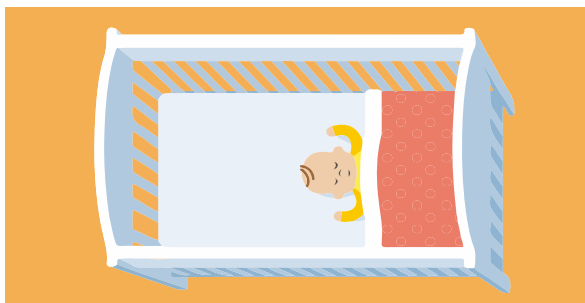
Babies spend a lot of their time sleeping. Some sleeping arrangements are not safe. They can increase the risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) including SIDS and fatal sleeping accidents. SIDS remains the most common category of deaths between one month and one year of age. The chance of babies dying suddenly and unexpectedly is greater if they sleep on their tummies or sides. Knowing how to safely put your baby down to sleep can reduce the risk to your baby.

## MY BABY WAS BORN PREMATURELY AND SLEPT ON HER FRONT IN HOSPITAL, IS IT OKAY TO SLEEP HER ON HER FRONT AT HOME AS WELL?

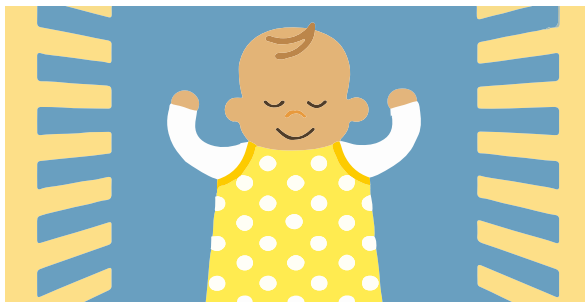
Some babies who were born very prematurely and spent some time in a neonatal unit may have been slept on their fronts for medical reasons. Remember that babies in neonatal units are under constant supervision. By the time your baby comes home they should be sleeping on their back. Babies may find it hard to adjust from a sleeping position they have been used to, so persevere and do speak to your Paediatrician if you are concerned. Front-sleeping should only be continued for on-going medical reasons on the advice of your Paediatrician.

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER  
QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS,  
PLEASE CONTACT US.

## WHAT IS THE SAFEST POSITION FOR MY BABY TO SLEEP?



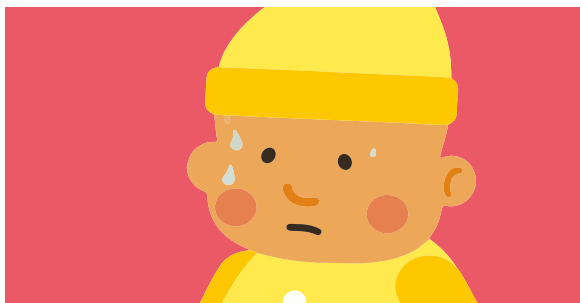
Sleeping your baby on their back (known as the supine position) every night is one of the most protective actions you can take to ensure your baby is sleeping as safely as possible.



Your baby's face and head needs to stay uncovered during sleep as this reduces the risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI). A good way to do this is to put baby's feet at the bottom of the cot so that baby can't slip down under the bedding. You might decide not to use blankets at all and instead, use a safe baby sleeping bag: one with fitted neck and arm holes and no hood.

Keep baby's head uncovered when indoors or in a car. Ensure baby has no head coverings, such as

## WHAT IS AN IDEAL ROOM TEMPERATURE?



Babies that get too hot have a greater chance of SIDS. We recommend keeping the room where your baby sleeps at a fairly cool temperature of 16-20°. This can be more difficult in summer months or living somewhere warm. If the room where the baby sleeps is difficult to cool use lighter bedding and clothing and open the bedroom door and a window, if it is safe to do so. Baby sleep bags will have guidance on what tog to use for each season. You might also like to use a fan to cool the room, but don't aim it directly on the baby. A thermometer can help you to make sure the room is at the right temperature.

## CHECKLIST - WHEN BABY IS PLACED TO SLEEP CHECK THAT:

- Baby's feet are positioned at the bottom of the cot
- Bedding is tucked in secure and is not loose. Alternatively, place baby in a safe baby sleeping bag
- Head coverings are removed before baby is placed for sleep
- There are no doonas, loose bedding or fabric, pillows, lambswool, bumpers or soft toys in the cot

## CO-SLEEPING WITH YOUR BABY



Some parents choose to share a bed or other sleep surface (also known as co-sleeping) with their babies. It is important for you to know that there are some circumstances in which co-sleeping with your baby can be very dangerous. It is important for you to know that there are some circumstances in which sharing a bed with your baby can be very dangerous.

Bed sharing increases the chance of SIDS and is particularly dangerous if:

- Either you or your partner smokes (even if you do not smoke in the bedroom)
- Either you or your partner has drunk alcohol or taken drugs (including medications that may make you drowsy)
- You are extremely tired
- Your baby was born premature (37 weeks or less)
- Your baby was born at a low weight (2.5kg or 5½ lbs or less)

You should never sleep together with your baby if any of the above points apply to you. You must be especially careful when giving feeds that you are not in a position where you could both fall asleep in the bed together.

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