



# Safe Infant Sleeping

Information for Parents, Carers  
and Families

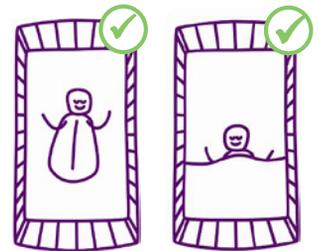
**Six ways to sleep your baby safely and reduce the risk of sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI):**

1. **Sleep baby on back\***
2. **Keep baby's head and face uncovered**
3. **Keep baby smoke free before and after birth**
4. **Safe sleeping environment night and day**
5. **Sleep baby in a safe cot in parent's room**
6. **Breastfeed baby\*\***

**\* Medical advice may be needed for babies with a severe disability**

**\*\* While breastfeeding is best, it may not be possible for every mother**

To **sleep your baby safely, both day and night**, follow these recommendations wherever your baby sleeps, including at the home of friends or relatives.



These recommendations have been adapted from Red Nose Safe Sleeping Public Health Campaign  
[www.rednose.com.au](http://www.rednose.com.au)

**WOMEN AND NEWBORN HEALTH SERVICE**  
**King Edward Memorial Hospital**

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This brochure is endorsed by the Womens and Newborns Health Network of Western Australia (2008).



This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

Compiled by: Women and Newborn Health Service,  
Womens and Newborns Health Network and  
Child and Adolescent Health Service  
Web: [www.wnhs.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.wnhs.health.wa.gov.au)  
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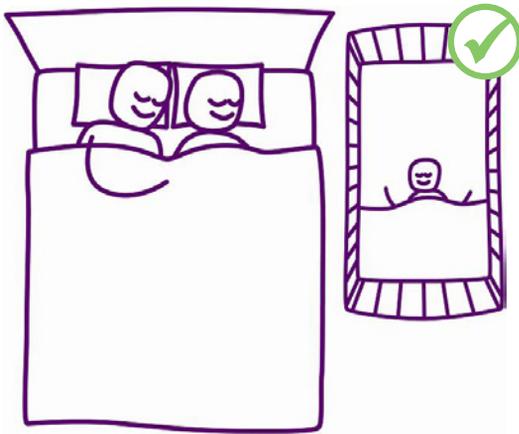
## Room-sharing **RECOMMENDED**



Room-sharing is when **your baby sleeps in their own cot next to your bed** for the first 6 to 12 months of life.

This can help you to:

- Respond quickly to your baby's needs.
- Settle and comfort your baby more conveniently than if sleeping in a separate room.
- Bond with your baby.
- Maintain breastfeeding.
- Reduce the risk of your baby dying from SUDI, including Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or fatal sleep accidents.



## Safety tips for cot sleeping

### Where to place your baby:

- Place your baby in the cot with their feet close to the bottom end.

### What bedding or covers to use:

- Baby sleeping bag with fitted neck and arm holes OR
- Lightweight bed covers (not a doona) that are tucked in firmly and only come up to your baby's chest.

### Mattress, cot and bassinette:

- The mattress should be firm, flat and fit the cot/bassinette without any gaps around the edges.
- Make sure your baby's cot meets the Australian Standards for cots AS2172, second hand cots older than 10 years will not be safe. There should be no large gaps between the bars which could trap your baby's head.
- If you are using a portacot, it is important it meets Australian Standard AS2195. Portacot's are not suitable for babies 15kg and over. Only use the firm, thin, well-fitting mattress that is supplied with the portable cot. Never add a second mattress or additional padding under or over the mattress, as baby may become trapped face down in gaps between the mattress and the sides.
- These two Australian Standards for cots are the only two that meet the mandatory standards for long term unsupervised sleep in Australia according to ACCC

### Wrapping and clothing:

- Wrapping your baby may help them to settle and stay on their back.
- The wrap should be loose enough to allow your baby's hips to bend and chest to expand.
- Do not wrap your baby when they are unwell.
- To stop your baby from overheating, do not over dress your baby and keep their head uncovered (no beanies).

### Other important information:

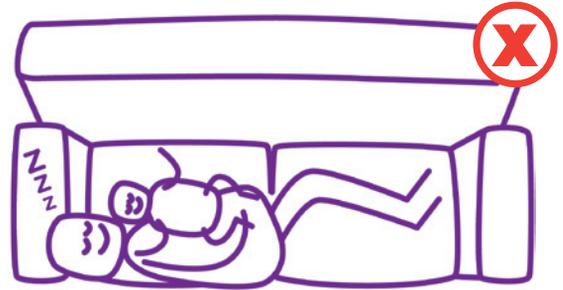
- Your baby should **NOT** be left to sleep unsupervised in a pram, stroller or bouncinette.

**Soft toys, cot bumpers, pillows, sleep positioning aids, sheepskin rugs or wool underlays should NOT be placed in your baby's cot as they may cause suffocation and reduce airflow.**

**For more safety tips for cots and prams visit [www.productsafety.gov.au](http://www.productsafety.gov.au) or [www.kidsafewa.com.au](http://www.kidsafewa.com.au) or [www.rednose.com.au](http://www.rednose.com.au)**

## Co-sleeping is NOT recommended

Co-sleeping is when a parent or carer is asleep with a baby on the same sleep surface, such as a bed, couch, or beanbag.



### There are some situations when co-sleeping is associated with an increased risk of SUDI:

- Babies under four months of age, and when your baby is premature or very small.
- Where your baby would share the same sleep surface with a parent/carer who is a smoker.
- Where there are pillows, adult bedding or covers that may cover your baby's face.
- Where your baby could become trapped between the wall and bed, could fall out of bed, or could be rolled on.
- Where the parent/carer is overly tired or has been drinking alcohol or using drugs that may make them sleepy.
- Where your baby would share the same sleep surface with other children or pets.

## If you choose to share the same sleep surface with your baby after four months of age

### Where to place your baby:

- Place your baby on their back and beside one parent/carer (not in-between), so they do not overheat, become covered, or slip underneath pillows, adult bedding or covers.
- Make sure your baby is not too close to the edge of the sleep surface where they could roll off.
- Do not place pillows at the side of your baby to prevent them from rolling off.
- If the mattress is put on the floor as a safer option, make sure it is away from the wall and other furniture, so there are no gaps for your baby to slip into.

### Mattress and bedding or covers:

- The mattress must be firm and flat.
- Pillows, adult bedding or covers, and any other soft items, should be kept away from your baby.
- Make sure there is nothing soft underneath your baby e.g. sheepskin rug or a wool underlay.
- Your baby should be dressed in a baby sleeping bag with fitted neck and arm holes, so they can lie outside the adult bedding or covers, or only use light weight blankets (not a doona) that won't cover your baby's face.

### Wrapping:

- Your baby should not be wrapped when sharing the same sleep surface as a parent/carer to prevent overheating.

### Other important information:

- Other children or pets should NEVER share the same sleep surface with your baby.

**Any benefits of co-sleeping must be carefully considered with the risk factors stated above.**

**The safest place for your baby to sleep is in its own cot by the side of your bed.**

For further information, please contact your:

- Midwife
- Child Health Nurse
- General Practitioner (GP)
- Red Nose website - [www.rednose.com.au](http://www.rednose.com.au)

For help to stop smoking call the Quitline  
13 78 48