

Winter tips for keeping your baby safe



The safest place for your baby to sleep is on their back in a cot or moses basket in your room

NHS Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care Board

Remember – bed sharing with your baby if you smoke or have been drinking alcohol increases the risk of sudden infant death.

To find out more visit <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk> or speak to your midwife or health visitor.

Winter season and thinking about sleep safe for your baby

Winter is here. There are a few things you might want to think about for your baby's sleeping.

Winter weather:

- It is important that your baby does not get too hot at night or during daytime sleep. Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for you at night (18°C or 65°F) and cots should not be placed next to the window in the day (even winter sun can be very warm). Babies don't need extra layers when they sleep
- Covers should reach no higher than baby's armpits and be securely tucked in. Use lightweight blankets
- Don't cover your baby's head
- Feel your baby's tummy if you are not sure whether they are warm enough. Don't add extra clothing or bedding because your baby has cold hands - this is common in young babies
- Even in winter, most babies who are unwell or feverish do not need extra clothes
- Take off baby's outdoor clothes when you come indoors
- Don't leave your baby sleeping in a car seat when you come indoors
- Babies should never sleep with a hot-water bottle or electric blanket, and they should never be next to a radiator, heater or fire



The safest place for your baby to sleep is on their back in a cot or Moses basket in your room with you for the first six months.

Never sleep with a baby on a sofa or armchair.

Nights out, parties and staying with relatives and friends

- Always think about where your baby will sleep and who will look after your baby at night – if someone else is looking after your baby remember to discuss safe sleeping with them
- If you are planning to have a drink, ask someone else to help care for your baby in the night. That person should not drink alcohol. They should also not have any medication or drugs that make them sleep more heavily
- Remember not to let anyone smoke in your home
- If your baby has a regular routine, try and keep to this. Remember to explain the routine to the person who is looking after your baby if you are going out
- If your baby has formula milk, show the person who will be feeding them how to make up the feed correctly see: [Bottle feeding advice - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health/a-z/bottle-feeding-advice)
- If you are breastfeeding, leave information about defrosting and preparing your expressed milk: [Expressing and storing breast milk - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health/a-z/expressing-and-storing-breast-milk)
- Don't put the baby down on a sofa or propped in a chair. Always use a cot or Moses basket to sleep
- Choose a babysitter who is able to meet the needs of your baby and keep them safe. Always leave contact numbers with the sitter. Always return home at the time you said you would
- It is always better that your baby sleeps in their own cot, however if you need to use a travel cot for an occasional overnight stay make sure the mattress is clean, well fitting and firm. Make sure the baby's feet are at the bottom of the cot, baby is on its back and that light weight covers are used and tucked under armpits



Feeding your baby at night:

It is normal and essential for your young baby to feed at night. To help get enough rest you can:

- Keep the room fairly dark
- Keep your baby close so you hear them as they start to wake up
- Don't talk much and keep your voice quiet
- Put your baby down in the cot as soon as they are fed

To get your baby to sleep, being rocked or listening to soft singing can be helpful.

Always be mindful that even if you do not intend to fall asleep whilst feeding your baby it is very easy to do so. Prepare yourself for this possibility, for example, some mums say they:

- Set a timer to wake them in case they fall asleep
- Keep a dim light on
- Make sure their baby can't fall on to the floor
- Put them back in their own cot as soon as possible

If you would like further advice about the guidance given here, your Midwife, Health Visitor or Children's Centre worker will be able to help.

If your baby is unwell, seek medical advice promptly

- It can be difficult to judge whether an illness is more serious and requires prompt medical attention. [Is your baby or toddler seriously ill? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health/a-z/is-your-baby-or-toddler-seriously-ill/)
- Whilst your baby is unwell make sure they drink plenty of fluids and are not too hot. If your baby sleeps a lot, wake them regularly for a drink. If your baby is formula fed, wake them for a feed or extra drinks of cooled boiled water. A breastfed baby will need extra breastfeeds
- If your baby is not well, consider whether your baby sitter is able to care for them, and if so make sure you tell your babysitter anything they need to know



To find out more, visit www.lullabytrust.org.uk or speak to your midwife or health visitor.