

## Protect your baby against sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI)

Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) is a risk to babies until they are about 12 months old.

Although for some babies the cause of death is never found, many of these deaths are caused by suffocation and are preventable. There are things we can do to protect our babies.

### *Make every sleep a safe sleep*

Review your baby's sleep environment with your midwife during your first week at home. This will help you to be sure that your baby has their own safe sleep space – usually a cot or bassinet in the first few months (➔ **First week assessment on page 45**).

Always follow these safe sleep routines for your baby and your baby's cot.

### *Make sure your baby is safe*

Sleep your baby on their back to keep their airways clear for breathing. Put your baby to sleep in their own cot, not with an adult or another child who might accidentally smother them.

Always make sure your baby has a parent/caregiver who is alert to their needs and free from alcohol or drugs. Just as you would nominate a sober driver, every baby and child needs a sober caregiver.

### *Make sure your baby sleeps in their own cot*

**The safest place for all babies to sleep at night is in their own cot, bassinet, pēpi-pod® or wahakura, close to parents/caregivers and in the same room.**

If you choose to sleep in bed with your baby, it is much safer to put them in their own baby bed – for example, a pēpi-pod® or wahakura – beside you. This will help reduce the risk of your baby suffocating while they are asleep.



**For information about using a pēpi-pod® or wahakura visit [www.whakawhetu.co.nz](http://www.whakawhetu.co.nz) and [www.changeforourchildren.co.nz/tender\\_shoot/pepi\\_pod\\_programme/home](http://www.changeforourchildren.co.nz/tender_shoot/pepi_pod_programme/home).**



If you are out somewhere, make sure your baby has a safe place to sleep. Take your wahakura, pēpi-pod®, cot or bassinet with you.

It is never safe to put your baby to sleep in an adult bed, on a couch or on a chair.

Car seats or capsules protect your baby when travelling in the car. They are not suitable for your baby to sleep in when you are at home or at your destination.



If you don't have a baby bed, ask your Lead Maternity Carer or child health nurse for assistance to get one. If you are on a low income, you may be able to receive help from Work and Income.



**For more information visit [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz) or call 0800 559 009.**

### *Make sure your baby's bed is safe*

Your baby's bed needs a firm flat mattress that fits snugly so your baby can't get into any gaps between the frame and the mattress. There should be nothing in the bed that could cover their face or lift their head – no large stuffed toys, pillows, loose bedding or bumper pads. Babies don't need pillows and are safest sleeping flat on their backs.

### *Make sure your baby is healthy and strong*

Being smokefree during pregnancy and after is best for your baby. If a mother smokes during pregnancy, poisonous chemicals affect the growing baby. This weakens them after they are born so that they are unable to react as strongly to situations such as accidentally having their face covered. After your baby is born it is important to keep your home and car smokefree and make sure that others don't smoke around the baby. This will help your baby grow strong and healthy.

Feed your baby only breast milk for the first 6 months and when you have introduced solids keep breastfeeding for the first year and beyond. Make sure your baby is immunised on time.

➔ **For more on safe sleep, see *Protecting your baby from SUDI* on page 179.**



**If you find your baby not breathing, call for help, and begin rescue breathing (CPR) immediately. See page 213.**