

## REDUCE THE RISK OF COT DEATH

**Babies do not need hot rooms.** Around 65 F (18C) is the ideal temperature. A simple wall thermometer will help. All-night heating is only necessary in very cold weather, when a thermostat may be needed to maintain a constant temperature.

**A baby should never be put to sleep with a hot water bottle or electric blanket.** Neither should babies be allowed to sleep next to a radiator, heater, fire or in direct warm sunshine.

**A baby can become overheated because he/she is wearing too much clothing or too much bedding.** The table below is only a guide. If the baby is sweating or feels hot, take off some bedding. A nappy, vest and babygrow are all the clothing that is necessary.

Duvets, baby nests and sheepskins are such good insulators that they can cause a baby to overheat. Babies lose heat from their heads, so do not prevent them from losing excess heat by covering the baby's head with blankets, shawls and hats when indoors.

A baby should be put to sleep in such a way that their head does not become covered during sleep. The baby's feet should be placed close to or touching the foot of the cot. Cot bumpers and pillows prevent baby from losing excess heat and are therefore not recommended. Sleeping on the back is preferable to sleeping on the side, and sleeping on the front should be avoided.

### **Approximate tog values of baby clothing and bedding**

Vest	0.2
Babygrow	1.0
Jumper	2.0
Cardigan	2.0
Trousers	2.0
Nappy (disposable)	2.0 (less when very wet)
Sleeping suit	4.0
Sheet	0.2
Blanket (new)	2.0
Blanket (old)	1.5
Duvet/quilt	9.0

### **Remember a doubled blanket counts as double togs (= 3-4 togs)**

No more than a total of 12-14 togs for a room temperature of 60F (16C)

No more than a total of 10-12 togs for a room temperature of 65F (18C)

No more than a total of 8-10 togs for a room temperature of 70F (21C)

### **Smoke-free zone**

Cigarette smoking in pregnancy and around babies increases the risk of cot death. Giving up is the best option and help is available through SmokeFree Pregnancy. For advice, telephone 01302 312175.

### **Bed/sofa-sharing is for comfort, not sleep!**

While it is likely to be beneficial for parents to take their baby into bed, or on a sofa to feed or for comfort, it is preferable to place the baby back into a cot to sleep. This is especially important if the parents smoke or have consumed any alcohol.

### **Prompt Medical Advice**

The risk of cot death can be reduced by seeking prompt medical advice for babies who become unwell, particularly those who have a raised temperature or breathing difficulties, or who are less responsive than usual.

All this information can be found in your 'red book', your baby's health record.