

4.8 Safe Sleeping for Infants Guidance – Appendix 3

Bed Sharing



Before bed sharing ask yourself these questions

Remember, people sometimes bed-share accidentally as well as unintentionally. Circumstances also change, so complete this checklist and assess YOUR risk.

Do either you or your partner ever smoke?



Answer Yes



Smoking increases your baby's risk of sudden infant death syndrome whilst bed-sharing.

Have you or your partner recently drunk alcohol?



Answer Yes



Alcohol increases the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and accidental death whilst bed-sharing.

Did you smoke during pregnancy?



Answer Yes



Smoking during pregnancy increases your baby's risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome whilst bed-sharing

Have you or your partner taken any medication or drugs that might make you sleep heavily?



Answer Yes



Taking drugs or medication which impairs your consciousness increases the risk of accidental death whilst bed-sharing.

Are you excessively tired e.g. has less than 4 hours sleep in the last 24 hours?



Answer Yes



Excessive tiredness affects the way you sleep and increases the risk of accidental death whilst bed-sharing

Was your baby small at birth e.g. born before 37 weeks or weighing less than 2.5 kg/5.5lbs at birth?



Answer Yes



Some evidence suggests that small at birth babies may have an increased risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome while bed-sharing with non-smoking parents. There is a dramatically increased risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome for small babies whose parents smoke.

If you answer Yes to any of the questions then bed-sharing is NOT advisable. Instead consider using a 3-sided cot that attaches to your bed, or having a cot near to your bed.