Preventing Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI)

Information for parents and caregivers

For more information go to
http://www.moh.govt.nz
http://www.cymrc.health.govt.nz

Following the advice given here can help reduce the risk of SUDI.
Sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI) used to be called SIDS or cot death.

**No smoking during pregnancy**

Smoking during pregnancy is an important cause of SUDI because smoking damages babies before they are born. It is important to stop smoking as soon as possible after a pregnancy has been confirmed. Many women find that it is easier to give up smoking when they are pregnant. A midwife or health practitioner can help pregnant women and other household members who smoke quit smoking. A phone call to Quitline (0800 778 778) can help people to stop smoking.

**Sleeping position – Back to sleep**

Put babies down to sleep on their backs. Babies who sleep on their backs are less likely to get their faces accidentally covered by sheets or bedding.

**Sleeping environment**

**Room sharing**

The recommended sleeping environment is having baby sleeping in a cot or basinette near the parents’ bed.

Babies who sleep in the same room as parents for the first six months are at lower risk of SUDI.

**Co-sleeping**

Co-sleeping (a parent who sleeps with their baby in bed) is dangerous when:

- the baby’s mother has smoked during pregnancy
- the adult in bed with the baby has been drinking, or taking drugs or medicines that might reduce their awareness of the baby
- the co-sleeping adult is excessively tired.

There is also a small increase in the risk of SUDI from co-sleeping for babies less than three months old, whether or not the mother smoked during pregnancy.

**Breastfeeding – ‘Breast is best’**

Breastfeeding has many benefits for mothers and babies. Breastfeeding helps to keep babies healthy and well.