

## risk of cot death

Are you aware of the risk of cot death? How can you reduce the risk?

More than 350 babies die suddenly and unexpectedly every year in the UK of sudden infant death syndrome - cot death. The cause of these deaths is unknown. But, since parents and carers have been following risk reduction advice, the number of babies dying has fallen by over 70%.

**The safest place for your baby to sleep - day and night - is in a crib or cot. Keep the cot in a room with you for the first six months to help keep your baby safe and healthy.**

- Place your baby on their back to sleep, in a cot, in a room with you
- Do not smoke in pregnancy or let anyone smoke in the same room as your baby
- Do not share a bed with your baby if you have been drinking alcohol, if you take drugs or if you are a smoker
- Never sleep with your baby on a sofa or armchair
- Do not let your baby get too hot
- Keep your baby's head uncovered
- Place your baby in the "feet to foot" position so they can't wriggle under the bed clothes.

### **Do I need a monitor?**

There are devices available that monitor a baby's breathing and some also monitor the heart rate.

We recommended them for:

- Babies who have specific medical conditions, especially those that affect their breathing
- Parents who've lost a baby to cot death and go on to have another child. But there is no evidence that a home breathing monitor then reduces the risk of cot death.

**At Richmond Practice** our paediatrician can help you to assess any special risk to your newborn by conducting a thorough check-up.

