



For parents who choose to share a sleep surface with their baby the following strategies will help to reduce the risk of sudden infant death and fatal sleeping accidents (Queensland Health 2008a; SIDS and Kids 2007b):

- Sleep baby on the back from birth – never on the tummy or side.
- If the baby lies on their side to breastfeed, baby should be returned to the supine (back) position for sleep
- Make sure the mattress is firm and flat.
- Make sure that bedding cannot cover baby's face or overheat the baby (use lightweight blankets and remove pillows, doonas, and other soft items that could cover baby from the environment).
- Sleep baby beside one parent only, rather than between two parents, to reduce the likelihood of baby becoming covered by adult bedding.
- Ensure partner knows baby is in the bed.
- As an alternative to bedding, an infant sleeping bag may be used so that the baby does not share the adult bedding – do not wrap baby if sharing a sleep surface, as this restricts arm and leg movement.
- Make sure baby cannot fall off the bed – a safer alternative is to place the mattress on the floor.
- Be aware of potential situations where baby can become trapped.
- Pushing the bed up against the wall can be hazardous; babies have died after being trapped between the bed and the wall.
- Never place a baby to sleep in a bed with other children or pets. See SIDS and Kids Frequently Asked Questions for specific advice about the safest way to sleep twins.
- Never leave a baby alone on an adult bed or put baby to sleep on a sofa, bean bag, waterbed, or soft, sagging mattress.
- Three sided-cots (a cot with one side down) may be available; these can be attached to the side of the bed at the same level so that the baby has a separate environment but is still in contact with a parent during sleep.