Messages from parents who have had the tragedy of losing their baby.

“I was never made aware of the risks of co-sleeping. It took one time laying down with my son on a sofa when I was really tired. I fell asleep and woke to find my son gone”.

“Please don’t take your baby to bed with you, especially when you have had a drink, because when you wake up in the morning, just like my Lily, they could be dead”.

For further support and advice contact:

Your Health Visitor
Community Midwife
Your G.P.

The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths (FSID)
General enquiries: 0207 802 3200
Helpline: 0808 802 6868
www.fsid.org.uk

Your local Children’s Centre

For further information on keeping your baby/child safe or to download further copies of this leaflet please visit your Local Safeguarding Children Board at:

www.gateshead.gov.uk/lscb/home.aspx
www.stscb.org.uk
www.sunderlandscb.com
The North East has one of the highest rates of unexpected infant deaths in the country. There are some easy steps that you can take to reduce the risk of your baby dying unexpectedly.

Where does your baby sleep?

- The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a cot.
- The cot should be in your room for the first six months and after that, baby can be in its own room.
- To prevent wriggling down under covers, babies should sleep on their backs with their feet to the foot of the cot.
- Bed-clothes should be firmly tucked in and no higher than their shoulders.
- Babies should be checked regularly when sleeping in their car seat/travel system during car journeys.
- They should not be left to sleep in their car seat/travel system outside of the car.

Why is it unsafe to fall asleep with my baby?

Falling asleep with your baby if you are tired or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication, significantly increases the risk of your baby dying.

Accidents can happen

- You might roll over in your sleep and suffocate your baby.
- Your baby could get caught between the wall and your bed.
- Your baby could roll on to the floor and be injured.

If you sleep with your baby the risk of your baby dying unexpectedly is increased if you or your partner:

- are very tired;
- have recently drunk alcohol;
- have taken medication or drugs that make you sleep more heavily;
- are smokers (no matter where or when you smoke and even if you never smoke in bed).

Or

- If your baby was premature (born before 37 weeks);
- was low birth weight (less than 2½ kg or 5½ lb).

Other steps you can take to keep your baby safe

Keep smoke away

Don’t let anyone smoke in the same room as your baby.

Babies exposed to cigarette smoke are at an increased risk of dying unexpectedly.

Too hot, too cold

Don’t let your baby get too hot (or too cold).

There is an increased risk of babies dying if they get too hot.

Use sheets and lightweight blankets but not duvets, quilts, baby nests, wedges, bedding rolls or pillows.

If your baby is sweating or their tummy feels hot to the touch, take off some of the bedding or clothing, even if the baby is asleep. Don’t worry if baby’s hands or feet feel cool, this is normal.

Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for you, about 18°C (65°F) is ideal. The generally accepted normal body temperature for a healthy person is 37°C.