

Caring for my baby plan

As well as the joy a new baby can bring to a family, a baby can also bring with it many challenges. The most common issues during those early days can include crying and safe sleep.

Crying - babies cry for a variety of reasons and tend to cry more frequently at about 2 weeks of age, reaching a peak at around 6-8 weeks of age, where they then tend to cry less. Infant crying is normal but can be upsetting and frustrating – but it's important to remember, that babies cry, it will stop, and you can cope. ICON is a programme that provides information on crying and how to cope. For more support and information see the [ICON leaflet](#).

Safe sleep is important in reducing the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), sometimes known as cot death. The safest place for a baby to sleep is in a cot, Moses basket or travel cot, in the same room as parents/carers for the first six months. Every sleep counts. For more information see the [ESC leaflet](#).

Below are some common scenarios that can arise when caring for your baby that might be helpful to plan for.



SAFE SLEEP: Every Sleep Counts

What are the risks if I'm feeling really tired?

Don't be tempted to take your baby to bed with you. The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a cot, Moses basket or travel cot, in the same room as you for the first six months

My baby will be spending the night at their grandparents/carers – where will they sleep?

Do the caregivers understand the importance of safe sleep? Have you shared the [ESC leaflet](#) with them?

I plan to have an alcoholic drink tonight – what sleeping arrangements should I make for my baby?

Co-sleeping with a baby can increase risks, and even more so if you have consumed alcohol, taken drugs or medicine that might make you sleepy. Make sure your baby has a safe place to sleep and there is a sober caregiver who can respond to baby.

Where should my baby sleep when we go on holiday?

Remember, Every Sleep Counts, even on holiday.

I am taking my baby on a long car journey. How can I keep them safe?

Car seats should only be used for car journeys. Make sure you plan for frequent stop breaks – babies under 6 weeks old should be taken out of their seat for a stretch every 30 minutes. Babies older than 6 weeks should be taken out for a stretch every hour.

Remember: Every Sleep Counts. Safe sleep is important in reducing the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

CRYING: ICON

My baby won't stop crying! Comfort methods I can try...

Think about if the baby is hungry, tired, in need of a nappy change or unwell? Consider skin to skin contact, singing a lullaby or taking a walk outside...

Who will I call if the crying won't stop?

Include contact numbers: friends, family, midwife, health visitor and GP.

What will I do if I need a few minutes to myself? What makes me feel better?

For example, phone a friend, make a drink, deep breathing etc.

A family member/friend will be looking after my baby. Will they be able to cope with the crying?

Share the ICON message with anyone who is caring for your baby and show them the [ICON leaflet](#).

Remember: It's OK to walk away if you are feeling stressed. Return to check the baby after a few minutes. Never ever shake or hurt a baby.