

Maternity

Preventing newborn injuries and falls

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

Having a newborn can be an exhausting time for new parents. The purpose of this leaflet is to support you to reduce the chance of your baby being injured.

Why is this necessary?

For every 100,000 live births, the estimated number of newborn falls is between 16 and 41. The majority of these falls happen when the baby is in the care of parents or visiting family members. It is easy to fall asleep while feeding or cuddling your baby. This increases the chance of your baby falling off your bed or chair and being seriously injured.

Which babies can be at highest chance of this happening?

- babies who co-sleep or are feeding with their parent in the same bed
- babies whose parent may have reduced awareness of what is happening to them (because of exhaustion, strong pain relief medication, mobile phones, dim lighting)
- babies whose parents have reduced movement (after surgery or epidural)
- babies whose parents have medical conditions (epilepsy, diabetes, disability, anaemia or higher BMI)
- babies affected by environmental factors (such as language barriers, time of day, limited support)

What you can do to make your hospital stay as safe as possible

- babies and mothers should not sleep in the same bed together
- if you're in bed with your baby, move the side rails to an up position and lower the bed to its lowest height

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- if you start feeling tired put your baby safely in the cot next to you. You can ask staff to help if you cannot do this yourself
 - call for staff to help move your baby to the cot when you have finished feeding or holding your baby if you cannot do this yourself
 - you must use a cot to move your baby from one area to another. Do not carry your baby in your arms while you're in hospital

What to do when you go home

- read our '[Safe sleeping for your baby at home](#)' information leaflet (PDF). We'll give this to you when we discharge you and you leave the hospital.
- if your baby has a fall from a height and is less than one year old, you should visit a doctor, so they can check your baby for any injuries.
- if your baby falls and seems well, comfort them and monitor them for 24 hours. This is important because injuries can take time to show up.
- if your baby falls and has an obvious injury (dent, bruise, cut, bulging soft spot, pain when you touch them, bleeding, vomiting or does not wake up) call 999 immediately for an ambulance and assistance.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service, and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Or you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department: Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

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