

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CLINICAL EXCELLENCE

Centre for Clinical Practice

Exceptional review of the section on reducing the risk of SIDS within the NICE Clinical Guideline CG 37 Postnatal care - Routine postnatal care of women and their babies

Background information

Guideline issue date: 2006

3 year review (full guideline): 2009 (No update required)

5 year review (full guideline): 2011 (No update required)

Guideline developed by: National Collaborating Centre for Primary Care

Recommendations relating to section 7.8.2: Reducing the risk of SIDS

47. Parents should be given information in line with the Department of Health guidance about sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and co-sleeping (Reduce the risk of cot death, November 2005) which states that “The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a cot in your room for the first six months. While it’s lovely to have your baby with you for a cuddle or a feed, it’s safest to put your baby back in their cot before you go to sleep. There is also a risk that you might roll over in your sleep and suffocate your baby, or that your baby could get caught between the wall and the bed, or could roll out of an adult bed and be injured.” [B]
48. Parents should be advised never to sleep on a sofa or armchair with their babies. [B]
49. If parents choose to share a bed with their infant, they should be advised that there is an increased risk of SIDS, especially when the baby is less than 11 weeks old, if either parent: [B]
 - is a smoker
 - has recently drunk any alcohol
 - has taken medication or drugs that make them sleep more heavily
 - is very tired.
50. If a baby has become accustomed to using a pacifier (dummy) while sleeping, it should not be stopped suddenly during the first 26 weeks. [B]

Review recommendation

- The section of the guideline on reducing the risk of SIDS (section 7.8.2) should be updated at this time.

Process for reviewing the guidance

Following referral from the Department of Health, a focused literature search was conducted to be able to answer the following clinical question:

- What modifiable factors are associated with the risk of sudden death in babies in the first year of life?

Literature searches were limited to the date of the last review in 2011 to date.

Factors influencing the decision

Literature search

1. Through an assessment of abstracts from the focused search 16 studies relating to the clinical question were identified.
2. The findings of the identified studies were mainly in line with the current recommendations. However, there was also new evidence on bed-sharing/co-sleeping (new analysis of existing evidence), breastfeeding and pacifier-use, which may affect current recommendation(s).

Guideline Development Group perspective

Review proposal put to the Guideline Development Group:

The section of the guideline on reducing the risk of SIDS (section 7.8.2) should be updated at this time.

3. A questionnaire and a briefing paper presenting the new literature was distributed to the original Guideline Development Group to consult them on the need for an update of section 7.8.2 of the guideline: Reducing the risk of SIDS.
4. The briefing paper concluded that the section of the guideline on reducing the risk of SIDS may need updating at this stage as new literature was identified on:
 - Bed sharing/co-sleeping
 - Breastfeeding
 - Pacifier use

5. Six responses were received with four respondents indicating that they agreed with the review proposal to update the section of the guideline on reducing the risk of SIDS.
6. The two GDG members who disagreed with the review proposal commented that in their view, the current recommendations provide balanced guidance regarding bed-sharing and that the current evidence in the “SIDS field” does not support the idea of a blanket ban on bed-sharing.
7. They suggested that if the recommendations are to be changed it should be to underline the dangers of sofa-sharing or bed-sharing when the parents have consumed alcohol or drugs as the quantified risk in these circumstances are a magnitude higher than any other SIDS risk factor regardless of infant age. And that the risk of bed-sharing in the absence of these hazardous conditions amongst non-smoking parents is negligible.

Anti-discrimination and equalities considerations

8. No evidence was identified to indicate that the guideline scope does not comply with anti-discrimination and equalities legislation. The original scope is inclusive of women and their babies in the postnatal period, defined as 6–8 weeks after birth.

Relationship to quality standards

9. This guideline is related to a quality standard on postnatal care that is in development.

Conclusion

10. Through the process, new evidence was identified on:
 - Bed sharing/co-sleeping
 - Breastfeeding
 - Pacifier use
11. The section of the guideline on reducing the risk of SIDS (section 7.8.2) should be updated at this time.

Mark Baker – Centre Director
Khalid Ashfaq – Technical Analyst

Centre for Clinical Practice
16 July 2013