

# A guide to CPR and safe sleep for your baby

Important steps for learning how to perform infant cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and safer sleep advice for parents and carers.





# CPR for infants under 12 months: in pictures



If your baby isn't moving or breathing, make a loud sound and gently tap them to see if they respond.



If they don't react to your voice or touch, you need to act quickly and get help.



If someone is with you, ask them to **call 999 immediately**. If you are alone, call 999 and put them on speakerphone.



Place the baby on their back on a firm flat surface.

Check the baby's airway is clear.



Tilt head very slightly and lift the chin into neutral position.



**Rescue breaths:** Put your mouth around the baby's mouth and nose. Blow gently, the baby's chest should rise and fall. Repeat 5 times.



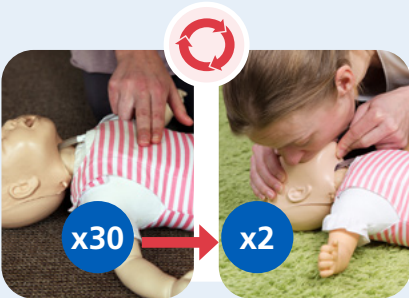
**Chest compressions:** Press down a third of the centre of the chest (about 4cm), just beneath the level of the nipples with 2 fingers. Lift your fingers off the chest in between compressions allowing the chest to come back up fully. Do this 30 times. Aim for 100-120 compressions per minute.



= 100-120 compressions



Give 2 rescue breaths.



**Repeat if no response:** Give 30 chest compressions followed by 2 rescue breaths. Keep doing this until emergency help arrives or they start breathing normally.

If the baby starts to breathe normally by themselves, you can put them in the recovery position.



# CPR for infants under 12 months: Step by step



If your baby isn't moving or breathing, make a loud sound and gently tap them to see if they respond.



If they don't react to your voice or touch, you need to act quickly and get help.

1. If someone is with you, ask them to **call 999 immediately**. If you are alone, call 999 and put them on speakerphone so you can start CPR.
2. Place the baby on their back on a firm, flat surface.
3. Check their airway is open and clear. Tilt the baby's head back very slightly and lift the chin to ensure neutral position of the head.

## 4. Rescue Breaths

1. Take a breath, then cover the baby's mouth and nose with your mouth making a seal.
2. Blow a breath into the baby's mouth and nose, to make the chest visibly rise. Take your mouth away and let the chest fall as the air comes out.
3. Take another breath and repeat this sequence 4 more times. If their chest does not rise on its own after 5 breaths, move on to chest compressions.

If the baby is unresponsive and their airway is blocked, [treat them for choking](#)

[Read how to prevent a child from choking](#)

## 5. Chest compressions

1. Put 2 fingers on the lower half of sternum in the centre of the chest just beneath the level of the nipples and press down a third of the depth of the chest (about 4cm).
2. Repeat the chest compressions 30 times at a rate of 100 to 120 compressions per minute (2 every second). Lift your fingers off the chest in between compressions allowing the chest to come back up fully.
3. After 30 chest compressions, open the airway and give 2 rescue breaths.



The beat of the song 'Nelly the Elephant' can help you keep the right rate.

## 6. Repeat

1. Keep repeating 30 chest compressions, followed by 2 rescue breaths until emergency help arrives or the baby starts showing signs of life and starts to breathe normally.
2. If the baby shows signs of becoming responsive, such as coughing, opening their eyes, making a noise, or starting to breathe normally, **put them in the recovery position**.





## Simple steps to help keep your baby safe when sleeping

1. Always place your baby on their back to sleep in a moses basket or cot in the same room as you, for every sleep for the first six months. Keep their feet at the end of the moses basket or cot to prevent them from wriggling down beneath the blanket and overheating.



2. Never fall asleep with your baby on a sofa or armchair.



3. Never share a bed with your baby if you smoke, have drunk alcohol or have taken any drugs or medication that could make you drowsy



4. Keep your home/clothes smoke-free and don't allow visitors to smoke indoors.



5. Keep the cot clear and free from pillows, duvets, cot bumpers, toys and weighted bedding. Don't use products designed to keep your baby in one sleep position such as wedges, straps or pods. Never tilt or prop the cot.



6. Keep your baby's face and head uncovered. No hats indoors.



7. Do not let your baby get too hot or cold. Try to keep their room temperature between 16 – 20°C.





## Safer sleep for your baby: Follow these steps

8. Babies should not sleep in bouncers. If your baby falls asleep in one, move them to a Moses basket or cot.



9. If you choose to co-sleep with your baby, try to make the space as safe as possible:

**!** Keep adult pillows and bedding away from your baby.



**!** Be aware of bed frames and slats where babies could get trapped.

**!** Do not sleep in the bed with your baby and other children or pets.



**!** Never leave your baby to sleep alone in an adult bed.

[Read more information on co-sleeping](#)



10. When in a sling a baby's airway can get blocked if they're in a curved position or if their nose or mouth is covered. Ensure you can see your baby's face, keep their chin off their chest, and keep their nose and mouth clear. For more details, visit the [RoSPA website](#).



11. Babies shouldn't sleep in car seats for long periods. Visit [The Lullaby Trust](#) website for tips to help keep your baby safe while travelling in a car seat.



[Watch this video on how to create a safer sleep environment for your baby](#)



Information in this leaflet is supported by the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) and has been developed in support of Rowan's Rule.

## Rowan's Rule

A family whose baby boy tragically stopped breathing at home have partnered with Family Hub Derby to create a video sharing their story and teaching infant CPR.



Like many new parents, Rachel and Christian Pepper didn't know how to perform infant CPR when their one-week old son, Rowan suffered a cardiac arrest in October 2022. Despite NHS staff trying to save him, he sadly died a week later, as a result of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

In his memory, the Pepper family collaborated with Family Hub Derby to create an educational video that tells Rowan's story and demonstrates infant CPR in simple steps.

**[Watch Rowan's Rule - How to Perform Infant CPR](#)**, a video supported by University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust (UHDB).



**If you are worried about your baby do not hesitate to seek medical advice.**

- For non-urgent advice during working hours seek advice from your GP or Health Visitor
- For non-urgent advice out of hours call 111
- In an emergency - call 999.

## Useful contact details

You can contact your health visiting team on:

- Staffordshire phone: **0808 178 0611** or text our chat function: **07520 615722**
- Stoke-on-Trent phone: **0808 178 3374** or text our chat function: **07312 277161**.



For contact details of your midwife, as well as information on infant CPR and safer sleep advice, please visit:

**[staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk/infantcprandsafesleep](https://staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk/infantcprandsafesleep)**