**Movement Monitors**

**This information has been written by the Lullaby Trust as a guide to help you ensure your baby follows the safer sleep advice. Please ensure you read the instructions that come with your monitor and contact the manufacturer if you have any additional questions.**

**A monitor can never replace your own supervision of your baby, and if you are ever worried about your baby’s health you should seek medical advice.**

**How to use a movement monitor**

A movement monitor can be an important aid to families to help you enjoy your baby and lessen anxiety. You should however, make sure that you do the following before you use it:

* Read the instructions carefully and follow them
* Make sure you plan your baby’s sleep
* Have an action plan of what to do if the alarm sounds (see below)
* Follow the safer sleep advice and keep your baby in the same room as you.

The monitor works by picking up movement including the movement of breathing*.* Although this monitor attaches directly to your baby’s nappy, you should be aware that it can pick up movement that does not come from the baby if your baby is placed somewhere where there is other movement. So be aware of this if you are using the monitor when your baby is in any of the following:

* A car or other vehicle
* A buggy or pram
* On a surface with another person or an animal – such as an adult co-sleeping with a baby

The monitor is most effective when your baby is sleeping on their own **separate sleep surface, on their back.**

**Safer Sleep**

The Lullaby Trust’s Safer Sleep advice has saved many babies’ lives. It is all backed by research that has shown how to reduce the chance of babies dying suddenly with no explanation (known as sudden infant death syndrome, SIDS, or cot death). To reduce the chance of SIDS, you should follow this key advice for baby sleep:

* Put babies on their BACK for every sleep
* In a CLEAR, FLAT sleep surface
* Keep them SMOKE FREE

There is more safer sleep advice on the Lullaby Trust’s website: lullabytrust.org.uk. Using a movement monitor does not mean you should not follow all the safer sleep advice. Following these simple steps can give you peace of mind to enjoy this special time with your baby.

**Can movement monitors prevent sudden infant death?**

There is no research evidence that monitors prevent SIDS (1,2). Babies are known to have died whilst using a monitor (3). It would be hard to do a research study on this now: SIDS is thankfully relatively rare now, and such studies would have to involve an enormous number of babies to obtain reliable statistical information comparing babies on monitors to others at equal risk. In advice published in 2016, The American Academy of Pediatrics concludes monitors should not be used as strategy to reduce the risks of SIDS (1), and this summarises the advice that we now give.

**Advantages of movement monitors**

Many parents gain reassurance using a monitor with their baby. This is from knowing that they will be alerted should the baby stop making (breathing) movements. Parents say they themselves are more able to sleep knowing that the monitor will wake them if their baby stops (breathing) moving.

A movement monitor can also help you to follow the safer sleep advice, for example by making sure your baby sleeps on their back.

**Disadvantages**

Using a monitor can help you to look after your baby with more confidence, but there are also some downsides:

* Movement monitors do not sound if your baby is choking on something
* Movement monitors can give false alarms which can make you more anxious
* Families may rely upon the monitor to tell if their baby is well and may not look out for other signs of illness or overall health and development (4).

**If you follow the safer sleep advice and continue to keep your baby in the same room as you, you will help to lessen these risks.**

**Have a plan for if your monitor alarms**

Whilst we hope that your alarm will never need to go off, you should make sure you have a plan and know what you will do if it does go off. The following is a brief summary of the measures that you should consider:

1. Switch off the alarm and check your baby:
* Look down for movement of the baby’s chest and/or tummy
* Place your cheek next to the baby’s face to whether you can feel or hear any breathing
* Stimulate your baby by talking, blowing on or touching its face, tickling the soles of the feet. Do not shake your baby
1. If your baby doesn’t respond to you dial 999 immediately and put your phone on speaker so the operator can talk you through how to help your baby until professional help arrives.
2. If your baby does respond to you but you are worried about their health, seek medical advice.

**Movement Monitor use on the Care of Next Infant Programme (CONI)**

You may have received this monitor through the Lullaby Trust if your baby is on the Care of Next Infant Programme (known as the CONI programme). This programme offers support for families who have previously had a baby die suddenly and unexpectedly.

If you received this monitor through the CONI programme you will have received a separate letter and information about how to use it when you received it. If you did not receive this please contact the CONI team at the Lullaby Trust on coni@lullabytrust.org.uk or your local CONI Co-ordinator.

**About the Lullaby Trust**

The Lullaby Trust provides emotional support for bereaved families, promotes expert advice on safer baby sleep and raises awareness of sudden infant death.

Working with the NHS, we run a national health-visitor led service for bereaved parents, Care of Next Infant (CONI) programme, which supports families before and after the birth of their new baby.

We are committed to supporting research to understand why so many babies a year die suddenly and unexpectedly in the UK and to find out more about how to prevent these tragic deaths.

The Lullaby Trust operates nationwide across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We run an information line for parents and professionals (0808 802 6869) and a dedicated line for bereaved families (0808 802 6868). Both are free to call from landlines and mobiles.

We campaign tirelessly, lobbying government to keep sudden infant death on the public health agenda. Since we formed as The Foundation for the Study of Sudden Infant Deaths (FSID) in 1971 we have played a key role in the reduction of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) by over 80%

**References**

1. SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2016 Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment

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2. Strehle E-M, Gray W, Gopisetti S et al. Can home monitoring reduce mortality in infants at increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome? A systematic review. Acta Pediatr 2012 Jan;101(1):8-13.

3. Samuels MP, Stebbens VA et al (1993). Deaths on infant apnoea monitors. Maternal and Child Heath September 1993: 262-266

 British Paediatric Respiratory Group. Arc Dis Child 60: 76-80

4. Ward SL, Keens TG et al (1986). SIDS in infants evaluated by apnoea programs in California. Pediatrics 77: 451-458.