

# Why Do Babies Die When In Bed With Others?

## An Anatomic Developmental Hypothesis

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**Hypothesis: Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) may occur when a vulnerable infant, at a critical early developmental stage, is subjected to flexion of the head onto the chest or direct pressure on the jaw, leading to middle airway narrowing or occlusion**



### First recorded Biblical Times:

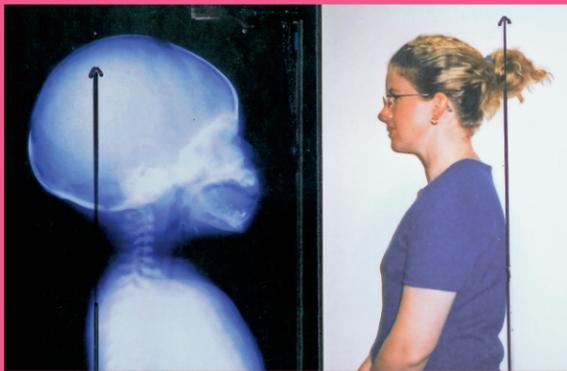
- Sleeping baby
- Silent death
- Peak at 2 months
- Autopsy usually asphyxial findings

### THE 'BABY' ITSELF MUST GIVE US THE CLUES



### Newborn

- Large heavy head
- Short neck
- Small lower face



One third of the baby head is behind the spinal line

'Toffee Apple on a Stick'

### Lower face immature

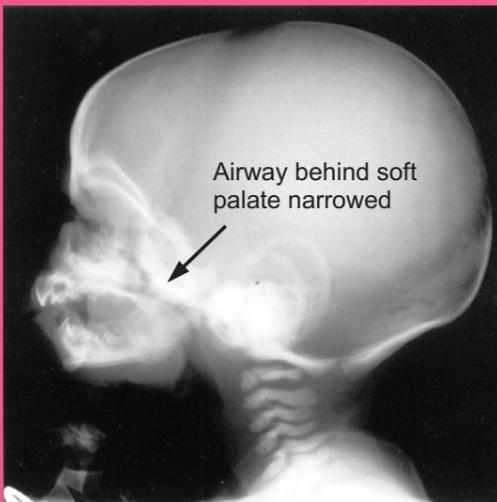
- Flat lower jaw bone
- Tongue fills mouth space
- Loose temporo mandibular joint
- No teeth



Infant Jaw



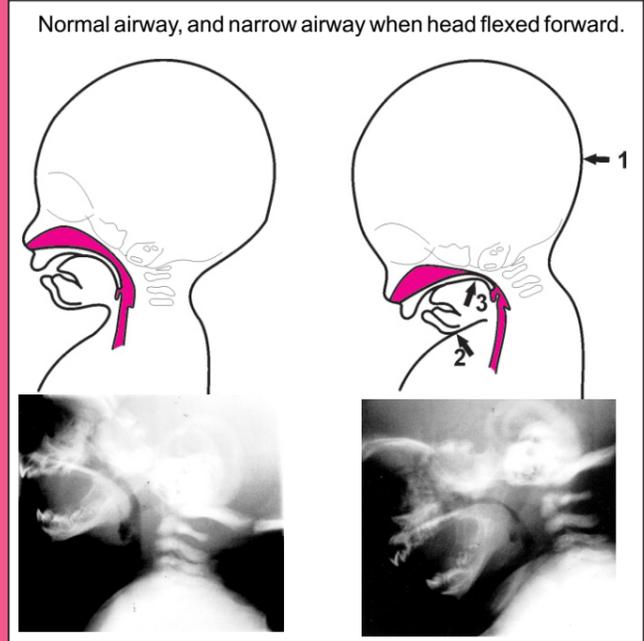
Adult Jaw



Airway behind soft palate narrowed

When baby is asleep the chin can be pushed up and back with slight pressure

Mother's finger pushing baby's mouth closed



Normal airway, and narrow airway when head flexed forward.

The temporo-mandibular joint stabilises and the upper airway is maintained (cannot be blocked) usually at about 5-6 months of age, when the teeth begin to erupt.

### SITUATIONS OF AIRWAY RISK



Co-sleeping



Prone sleeping



Pillow



Car safety seat



Slings



### SLEEP SAFELY

- On back
- Flat
- Own sleep surface
- In room with parent
- No pillows
- Avoid slings, hammocks
- Car seat use for transport only