

Sudden unexpected postnatal collapse

The following is a summary of recommendations taken from the " Sudden Unexpected Postnatal Collapse Framework for Practice for Reducing Risk, Investigation and Management 2022". You should follow these recommendations. The full report can be found at the BAPM website under "publications" and by using the following link:

[Sudden and Unexpected Postnatal Collapse | British Association of Perinatal Medicine \(bapm.org\)](https://www.bapm.org/publications/sudden-and-unexpected-postnatal-collapse)

You should download the forms found in the appendix of the report and complete fully.

This document uses the following definition:

An infant who suffers a 'Sudden Unexpected Postnatal Collapse' includes any term or near term (>35 weeks gestation) infant who:

- is well at birth (normal 5 minute Apgar score and deemed well enough to have routine postnatal care) *and*,
- collapses unexpectedly ie discovered in a state of cardiorespiratory extremis such that resuscitation with intermittent positive pressure ventilation is required *and*,
- collapses within the first seven days of life *and*,
- either dies or goes on to require intensive care or develops an encephalopathy

Summary of recommendations

- Infants who suffer a sudden and unexpected cardiorespiratory collapse within the first week of life should be recognised as having an increased risk of congenital anomaly or metabolic disease as an underlying cause for their collapse.
- All infants who suffer a sudden and unexpected cardiorespiratory collapse within the first week of life should undergo comprehensive investigation to determine the underlying cause.
- Such an investigatory process will involve interdisciplinary liaison to maximise diagnostic yield whilst minimising unnecessary tests for the child.
- A detailed history of the family and situational events is essential and should be obtained by a senior member of medical staff.
- All infants who die from such collapse should be notified to a Coroner/Procurator Fiscal.
- All infants who die should undergo post mortem performed by a perinatal pathologist.
- A detailed multiprofessional case review should follow the investigation of any unexpected infant death.