**Right sleeping bag, right time**

Some older babies still find comfort in being swaddled for bed as it helps them to settle and go to sleep. However, as a baby grows they tend to move around in their sleep a lot more and the swaddle can come free which for some leads to waking during their sleep cycle.

Once your baby has outgrown swaddling, I recommend the use sleeping bags instead of blankets. As most babies find comfort in still being swaddled, I steadily transition them from the swaddle to the sleeping bag by putting them in the sleeping bag and then lightly swaddling them over the top. The next stage would be to swaddle them with one hand out, then both with both hands out until eventually they are happy without the swaddle altogether.

Swaddling is normally used to 11 weeks, however, it is okay to use for longer but eventually you need to let them have their hands for freedom.

Sleeping bags are available, like duvets, in different ‘TOG’ ratings. This is a standard measurement that indicates how well the sleeping bag keeps you warm. The higher the rating, the better the heat retention.

Some of the brands will label and others won’t – but for those that do here is the basic guide to the ratings and the conditions in which to use them.

**Rough guideline**

Summer – 0.5 to 1.5 TOG, the lighter one during the day and the heavier for night.

Winter – 2.0 TOG upwards for winter days and nights

**Room temperature versus weight of sleeping bag**

* 13oC to 18oC (50o F to 65oF = 2.5 TOG plus
* 18oC to 20oC (65o F to 70o F = 2.0 – 1.5 TOG
* 21oC to 24oC (70o F to 75o F) = 1.5 – 1.0 TOG
* Anything hotter = 0.5 tog rate

This is also just a guideline, as you need to take into consideration what your baby is wearing underneath the bag as well.

**New Zealand Winters**

I would recommend for New Zealand winters (as well as other countries where homes are not centrally heated) that you dress your baby for bed in:

* 1 cotton undershirt with snaps
* 1 long-sleeved merino vest
* 1 babygrow (long-sleeved and with feet)
* 1 sleeping bag

Only one of these two items needs to have snaps (do up under the crotch). Remember, clothing layers under the sleeping bag are better than using extra blankets on the top.

If the home temperature drops below 16oC then I would suggest that you have a temperature-controlled heater on, set so that it just takes the chill off the room.

**New Zealand Summers**

I would recommend for New Zealand summers (as well as other countries where homes are not cooled by aircon) that you dress your baby for bed in:

* 1 cotton sleeveless or short-sleeved undershirt (during the day)
* 1 sleeping bag

OR

* 1 long-sleeved cotton undershirt (nighttime)
* 1 sleeping bag