

# Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

## **Background:**

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is also known as SIDS and it is any sudden or unexplained death of an infant between the ages of one month to one year old.
- Statistics state that SIDS is responsible for almost 50 deaths per 100,000 births in the United States. It is the leading cause of death in healthy babies.
- Not much is known about the real cause of SIDS, but some things that may put babies at risk are, inadequate prenatal care, tobacco smoking, use of heroine, teenage pregnancy, low birth weight, exposure to tobacco smoke, failure to breastfeed, gender (boys are more prone to getting SIDS), failure to laying the baby to sleep on it's stomach, and many more.
- Although the rate of SIDS has declined more than 50%, it is still the third leading cause of infant mortality in the United States and the first leading cause in infants from the age range of 28-364 days, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Aboriginal infants are more at risk than non- aboriginal infants by three to four times higher, according to website information.
- SIDS are not caused by neglect or abuse, contagious or infectious, or considered hereditary.
- Some practices that may help reduce the risk of SIDS in infants are positioning infants on their back or sides for sleep, not on their stomach, keep infants from second- hand smoke, keep babies comfortable not overheated.
- SIDS are also called "crib death"; not related to cribs.
- African American children are more at risk than Caucasian children to die from SIDS and Native Americans are more at risk with these to combine.
- According to recent studies some SIDS babies are born with brain abnormalities that make them even more prone to the sudden death in infants. The majority of babies with this condition (SIDS) have problems in their "arcuate nucleus", a part of the brain that is involved in controlling breathing and waking during sleep
- SIDS cannot be prevented, but there are ways that can help reduce the affect of it.
- Places that you can turn to for SIDS information or support are The Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Network, Inc., which is a non-profit agency. Their purpose is to eliminate SIDS through research, provide support, and raise public awareness.

## Statement of Problem

- The main goal that Healthy People 2010 wants to do in order to help SIDS is to reduce infant mortality.
- Healthy People 2010 view the problem as “Infant mortality is any death of an infant prior to their first birthday”. The infant also must have had a birth certificate to be considered infant death. They believe that “late term miscarriages and other fetal deaths are not considered infant mortality rates.”
- According to Healthy People 2010, in Kent County there is a huge difference in the rates of SIDS among white and black children. Based on this racial difference Healthy People 2010 wants to reduce the differences and are making this their prime objective in the national health promotion program.
- Healthy People 2010 also believes that infant mortality rates can decline even though the number of deaths among babies has increased.
- Healthy People 2010 also states, “Health officials have long held that any discussion of infant mortality rates may be more productive when done in the context of the number of deaths and other factors related to birth outcomes and infant mortality.”
- Healthy People 2010 states, “Health officials say the infant mortality rate alone is only part of the picture and does not provide information about other variables known to be related to infant mortality: age and education level of the mother, when prenatal care was begun, weeks of gestation at birth, and birth weight. For this reason, an increase or decrease in the infant mortality rate alone is often not a true reflection, nor a blanket indicator, of the many community dynamics that affect maternal and child health, and should not be interpreted as such.”
- Some data that Healthy People 2010 use to measure the progress being made to address this problem are the Healthy Start program (which expands the availability and accessibility of prenatal health care in over 100 communities), Medicaid and SCHIP (Medicaid is a state and federal partnership that provides access to prenatal care for eligible mothers. State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), children who would not have access to health care are covered by this), Toll-free prenatal care hotline (assist pregnant women and others seeking information on prenatal care), Folic acid campaign, “back to sleep” campaign. These are just some ways that they are reducing the risk of SIDS.

## Epidemiological Picture

- The First Candle/SIDS Alliance Program Support Center considers SIDS to be a Wellness issue. This program provides programs and services for those working in the health and human services arena. The details of their work involves providing guidance and materials for educational efforts on reducing the risk of infant death as well as providing compassionate grief support to those affected by an infant death.

- It is also their goal to make certain “the availability of quality assured educational and training materials and promote collaboration and coalition building within the professional community”, according to their Web site.
- Over 6,000 families are inflicted with SIDS.
- According to Natural Health and Longevity Resource Center:
  - SIDS is the cause of death in every five hundred babies.
  - After 30 years of research, scientists are not able to find the cause for SIDS.
  - The number of children that die from SIDS in one year are more than those that die of cancer, heart disease, pneumonia, child abuse, AIDS, cystic fibrosis and muscular dystrophy combined.
- According to Yale New Haven Hospital, “two new studies on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) demonstrate the progress being made in educating the public about prevention measures, but also point out what remains to be done.” However, according to their research, SIDS is still the main cause of death among infants.
- Although this is a health issue, the main target for SIDS is infants. It is shown through research that males are more prone to getting in contact with SIDS than females.
- According to The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends “that healthy babies be put to sleep on their backs. Placing the child fully on its back provides the safest situation and is the best position for sleep. The goal is to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome, which is the leading cause of death in children under the age of 11 months.”
- The CDC and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) applied for and invested money for a study by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) on SIDS and vaccination. The IOM is a private, nonprofit institution that provides health policy advice under a Congressional Charter granted to the National Academy of Sciences.

## Solutions

- Many researchers believe that one should place babies on their back when you put them to sleep. Don’t smoke around them. Use firm bedding materials. Avoid overheating your baby. Breast-feed your baby if you can.
- **Division of Reproductive Health: Activities—Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) (<http://www.cdc.gov/PRAMS/index.htm>)**

PRAMS is an “ongoing state- and population-based surveillance system designed to collect information on self-reported maternal behaviors and experiences that occur around the time of pregnancy” according to the definition that was given. PRAMS, which stands for, the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System, is another helping tool for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state health departments. PRAMS main focus is to give whatever they

may find that will help the nation with better health for mothers and infants to the health officials. PRAMS also gives the right for CDC to supervise changes in the mother and infant. According to the website, "PRAMS enhances information from birth certificates used to plan and review state maternal and infant health programs". The PRAMS program also helps gather information on what can be applied to the reason why babies are born alive and then what happens. It also allows other states to view their information so that new and other ways be also be introduced."

### **SIDS: "Back to Sleep" Campaign (<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids/sids.cfm>)**

- The "Back to Sleep" campaign is named for its recommendation to place healthy babies on their backs to sleep. This campaign has been successful in actively encouraging the issue of infants sleeping on their back to parents, family members, child-care providers, health professionals, and all other caregivers of infants according to its website. "Back to Sleep" is sponsored by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the SIDS Alliance, and the Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs. It is a great program because it allows awareness that babies sleeping on their back is a real danger to the baby and is the main reason why some babies die from SIDS.

### **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Program (<http://www.cchealth.org/services/sids/>)**

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Program is a program whose main focus is to "alleviate the tragedy surrounding SIDS by providing high quality, caring services to families and caregivers who have been affected by SIDS". It not only encourages those that have been exposed to it, but also allows the nation to know more about SIDS and the causes. It is also known as the Contra Costa SIDS Program. This program knows that SIDS can be a very hard thing to handle or get through and that is why the program was developed. To make sure that people are not alone in this time and never will be.

### **Internet Resources**

#### HealthAtoz- Your Family Health Site-Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

- [HTTP://WWW.HEALTHATOZ.COM/HEALTHATOZ/ATOZ/ENCY/SUDDEN\\_INFANT\\_DEATH\\_SYNDROME.JSP](http://www.healthatoz.com/healthatoz/atoz/ency/sudden_infant_death_syndrome.jsp)

#### National SIDS Resources Center

- [HTTP://WWW.CIRCSOL.COM/SIDS/.COM](http://www.circsol.com/sids/.com)

#### Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs

- [HTTP://WWW.ASIP1.ORG](http://www.asip1.org)

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  - [HTTP://WWW.BETTYCJUNG.NET/](http://www.bettycjung.net/)
- Child & Family Canada-Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
  - [HTTP://WWW.CFC-EFC.CA/DOCS/CCCF/00000127.HTM](http://www.cfc-efc.ca/docs/cccf/00000127.htm)
- Contra Costa Health Services
  - [HTTP://WWW.CCHEALTH.ORG/SERVICES/SIDS/](http://www.cchealth.org/services/sids/)
- Infant Health: Infant Morality
  - [HTTP://WWW.HEALTHYKENT.ORG/INFANT\\_HEALTH/INFANT\\_MORALITY.HTM](http://www.healthykent.org/infant_health/infant_morality.htm)
- National Center for Health Statistics-Healthy People 2000
  - [HTTP://WWW.CDU.GOV/NCHS/ABOUT/OTHERACT/HP2000/CHILDHLT/CILDHLT.HTM](http://www.cdu.gov/nchs/about/otheract/hp2000/childhlt/cildhlt.htm)
- Preventing Infant Mortality
  - [HTTP://WWW.POLICYALMANAC.ORG/HEALTH/ARCHIVE/HHS\\_INFANT\\_MORALITY.SHTML](http://www.policyalmanac.org/health/archive/hhs_infant_morality.shtml)
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- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services-Information on Shaken Baby Syndrome and Sudden Infant Death (SIDS)
  - [HTTP://WWW.DFPS.STATE.TX.US/CHILD\\_CARE/INFORMATION\\_FOR\\_CHILD\\_CARE\\_PROFESSIONALS/SBS\\_SIDS](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/information_for_child_care_professionals/sbs_sids)
- What Everyone Needs to Know-Facts About Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
  - [HTTP://SIDS-NETWORK.ORG/FACTS.HTM](http://sids-network.org/facts.htm)
- Why a Satisfactory Solution to the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Has Not Been Achieved
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<b>Back to Betty C. Jung's Web site</b>	<a href="http://www.bettycjung.net/">http://www.bettycjung.net/</a>
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