

What is SIDS?



Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexplained death of an apparently healthy infant younger than one year of age that remains unexplained after an autopsy, thorough death scene investigation, and medical health history review.

SIDS is one of the leading causes of death among US infants one month to one year of age.



SIDS can happen to any family, regardless of age, ethnicity, religion or economic status.

SIDS cannot be predicted or 100% prevented at this time, but research shows a baby's risk can be reduced by following the safe sleep recommendations.



For more information contact:

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Iowa SIDS Foundation is a statewide non-profit 501c3 health organization dedicated to providing emotional support to SIDS and SUID families, educating professionals and the general public about SIDS, and funding medical research into the causes of SIDS.

A Special Note for Grandparents:

When my children were babies, I was told to have them sleep on their stomach. Why is it different?

We appreciate that parents were told to put a baby to sleep on their stomach to reduce the chance of baby choking if they spit up. However, since the Back to Sleep Campaign in 1994, the SIDS rates in the US have been reduced more than 50% with no increase in choking deaths.

Is it OK to place baby on his side to sleep?

Placing babies to sleep on their side poses the risk of baby rolling onto their stomach. The American Academy of Pediatrics highly recommends that every baby is placed completely flat on their back for ALL sleep, naps and nighttime.

How can you keep baby warm without a blanket?

Blankets, soft mattresses, and other loose bedding that may cover baby's airway creates an opportunity for baby to re-breathe the air that was recently exhaled and high in carbon dioxide. This is a potential hazard for infants vulnerable to SIDS as they are unable to respond appropriately. The recommended alternative is a wearable blanket, such as a sleep sack or dressing baby in layers. Both options will keep baby warm AND safe!

Where should my grandbaby sleep if I don't have a crib or pack and play?

A clean, thin blanket placed on the floor in a safe area of your home is ALWAYS a better option than placing baby to sleep on a couch, recliner, or other adult sleep surface. Placing baby to sleep on these types of surfaces not only increases the risk of SIDS but other accidental sleep related deaths as well.



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Safe sleep



Reducing the Risk of
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
and Other Sleep Related Infant Death.

sleep Right - sleep Tight

1 - ALWAYS place baby flat on their back for all sleep, naps and nighttime.

2 - Use a safety approved crib, firm mattress, and tight fitting sheet ONLY!

3 - Keep all soft bedding, including blankets, pillows, and bumper pads out of the crib.

4 - Keep baby warm by using a wearable sleepsack instead of blankets. Keep baby's face uncovered at all times.



5 - Share a room, NOT a bed with baby! Avoid sleeping with baby on a couch, bed, or other adult sleep surfaces.

6 - Keep baby's room temperature comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.

7 - Pacifier use at naps and nighttime is recommended. Delay pacifier use until breastfeeding is established.



Do not smoke during pregnancy and avoid exposing baby to second hand smoke to help reduce the risk of SIDS.

Car seats, swings, bouncy chairs, slings, and boppy pillows should NOT be used for routine sleep.



Expecting moms should:

- Visit their healthcare provider for regular prenatal care and well baby exams.
- Avoid nicotine, alcohol, and illicit drugs during pregnancy.
- Follow their provider's guidance for immunizations.

Avoid products and positioners that claim to prevent SIDS and other accidental sleep related deaths.



Provide supervised tummy time when baby is awake. Regular tummy time helps strengthen baby's head, neck, and shoulder muscles and aids in minimizing flat spots on the back of baby's head.

Educate others caring for your baby about the risk reduction recommendations.



*Based on recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2011.