

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Fact Sheet

What is SIDS?

The term SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) describes the sudden, unexplained death of a baby between one month and one year of age. SIDS is most common for babies two - four months of age who appear healthy but die without warning during sleep.

The exact cause of SIDS is unknown. Research has shown a number of risk factors play a role. For example:

- Babies who sleep on their tummies are at five times greater risk for SIDS.
- Babies who breathe second-hand smoke are at 2.5 times greater risk for SIDS.
- About one-in-five SIDS deaths occur while in the care of someone other than the parent.

Many of these deaths occur when babies, who are used to sleeping on their backs, are placed instead on their tummies. Babies who are used to sleep on their backs are 18 times more likely to die from SIDS.

SIDS in Kansas

According to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Bureau of Public Health Informatics, Annual Summary for Deaths in 2008:

- SIDS is the leading cause of death among babies age one month to one-year of age (303 deaths in 2008 - 52 related to SIDS or 17.2 percent).

- SIDS is most common in babies that are 2 – 4 months old.
- SIDS is two times higher in African Americans.

What Can We Do?

- Follow the ABC of “safe sleep” described on the back of this factsheet: Alone, on the Back, and in a Crib.
- When shopping in stores where cribs with bumpers, toys, blankets are displayed (unsafe sleep), ask staff to display a “safe sleep” environment.
- If you know a teen who takes care of babies, talk with them about proper safe sleep practices.
- Set a good example: realize that you may have slept on your back as a baby, but we now know that this is the safest way for babies to sleep.
- Talk about Safe Sleep Practices with Everyone Who Cares for Your Baby!

Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics. www.aap.org

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. [Www.nichd.nih.gov](http://www.nichd.nih.gov)

SIDS Network of Kansas. www.sidsks.org

Kansas Blue Ribbon Panel on Infant Mortality. www.datacounts.net/infant_mortality

Safe Sleep Kansas. www.safesleepkansas.org