Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

SIDS is a major cause of infant death after the first month of life.

Did you know?

- In the US, 2,500 babies die of SIDS each year (approximately one baby every three hours).
- SIDS strikes babies of all races, ethnicities, and backgrounds without warning.
- SIDS is sudden and silent. Infants who die from SIDS appear healthy prior to death.
- Approximately 20% of SIDS cases occur in childcare settings.

What is SIDS? SIDS is a medical term that describes the sudden death of an infant, under one year of age, which remains unexplained after all known and possible causes have been carefully ruled out. SIDS is not caused by external suffocation, vomiting, or choking. It is not contagious, does not cause pain or suffering to the infant, cannot be predicted, and is not caused by immunizations.

5 Things to You Can Do

1. **Place infants to sleep on their backs.** Back sleeping is the safest sleep position. An infant on her side can roll onto her stomach.
2. Use a crib that conforms to the latest safety standards. Avoid placing babies to sleep on waterbeds, sheepskins, featherbeds, futons and couches.
3. Use a firm, flat crib mattress without pillows, comforters, or blankets unless you are using the guidelines for blanket use suggested by Back to Sleep. Do not place soft objects in the crib, including toys.
4. Place the infant in the crib with sleeping clothing on and no other covering.
5. Make sure the baby has tummy time (while awake) and someone is watching.

Back to Sleep Saves Lives

In 1994, the national Back to Sleep campaign started spreading the word to parents, childcare providers, and doctors.

- Over 80% of US children now sleep on their backs (as of 2001).
- SIDS deaths dropped by 50%.

For more information

- **About EEC regulations**, call your licensor or EEC at (617) 988-6600 or the EEC website at [http://www.mass.gov/eeec](http://www.mass.gov/eeec)
- **For counseling and information to families**, the Massachusetts SIDS Center at the Boston Medical Center 1-800-641-7437 (a 24-hour, toll free number)
- **About the Back to Sleep Campaign**, [http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids/sids.cfm](http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids/sids.cfm)

Send this page home to your children’s parents!