

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)



Pre-reading

Questions: What is SIDS?

What are some of the risk factors for SIDS?

Definitions: Campaign – a planned action to achieve specific goals

Prevent – to stop something from happening or to stop someone from doing something

Tragedy – a very sad event

Reading

13 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, more commonly known as SIDS, is the unexplained and
36 sudden death of a baby under 1 year of age. For babies 1 month to 1 year old, it is the most
56 common cause of death in the United States. The highest rate of deaths from SIDS occurs in
infants 1 to 6 months of age.

59 SIDS happens when a baby stops breathing during sleep, but the causes of SIDS are
74 unknown. That being said, there is a link between SIDS and babies **exposed** to cigarette smoke.
90 Also, sleeping face down increases the risk for SIDS. It is because of this risk factor that the
108 successful “Back to Sleep” campaign was launched in 1994.

117 There are many things parents and caregivers can do to help avoid some of the risks that are
135 linked to SIDS. The following list includes some suggestions:

- 144 • Always put babies to sleep on their back (remember “Back to Sleep”)
- 156 • Make sure to use a crib especially designed for babies
- 166 • Breast feed – studies show that breast-fed babies have a lower rate of SIDS than
181 formula-fed babies
- 184 • Keep all loose blankets, pillows and stuffed animals out of babies’ cribs
- 196 • Keep crib bedding tight and not too soft
- 204 • Monitor the temperature in babies’ rooms – babies should never be hot or sweaty while
218 sleeping
- 219 • Give babies pacifiers – there is a link with pacifiers and a lower risk for SIDS, but
235 babies should not be forced to take a pacifier if they do not want one
- 250 • Do not allow smoking around babies or in homes where babies live or places where
265 they receive care
- 268 • Educate caregivers on the risk factors for SIDS

276 Many of the above suggestions have changed the way parents care for their sleeping babies.
291 There has been a decrease in the number of SIDS deaths since these risk factors have become
308 better known. According to the American SIDS Institute, the SIDS death rate is currently at an all
325 time low. In the past 25 years, there has been a 50 percent drop in the number of SIDS deaths each
346 year. However, it still occurs. We need to continue sharing our knowledge in order to prevent the
363 tragedy of SIDS.
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Understanding

1. What causes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)? _____

2. What does the word **exposed** mean in this reading? _____

3. Why do you think the “Back to Sleep” campaign was so effective? _____

4. What are some of the risk factors for SIDS? What can be done to help prevent SIDS? _____

5. How has awareness and education about SIDS impacted the rate of its prevalence? _____

6. How could stuffed animals or pillows be harmful in a baby’s crib? _____

Writing

Option A: Summarize the reading in your own words.

Option B: What new information did you learn about SIDS? How will you use this information?
