

**10****Sudden Infant Death Syndrome**

Patient name: \_\_\_\_\_

NRS  
DATE INITIAL

- I. The client/caregiver can define sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).**
- It is the sudden, unexplained death of a seemingly healthy infant younger than 1 year old.
  - Most SIDS deaths happen to babies between the age of 2 months and 4 months of age.
- II. The client/caregiver can list groups of infants most at risk for SIDS.**
- Babies placed on their stomachs or sides to sleep.
  - African American babies are two times as likely to die of SIDS.
  - American Indian/Alaska Native babies are three times as likely to die of SIDS.
  - Babies born to mothers who smoked during pregnancy are a higher risk.
  - Sharing a bed with adults increases the risk.
  - Preterm or low birth weight infants are at risk.
  - Sleeping on soft surface such as waterbed, couch, or pillows increases the risk.
  - Boy infants have higher risk of SIDS.
- III. The client/caregiver can list measures to prevent or reduce risks of SIDS.**
- New guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics for preventing SIDS was issued in October 2005.
    - Place babies on their backs to sleep. Do not place them on their side.
    - Be consistent to lay baby down to sleep on back.
    - Place the baby on a safety-approved crib mattress covered with a fitted sheet. Never place him or her on a pillow, quilt, sheepskin, or soft surface.
    - Do not sleep with your baby. It is okay to bring baby into bed to nurse or comfort, but return baby to crib to sleep.

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Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

- Keep baby in crib in the same room at first.
  - Do not use soft items in crib such as
    - Pillows
    - Blankets
    - Quilts
    - Sheepskin
    - Pillow-like bumpers in sleep area
  - Use sleep clothing (one piece sleeper) instead of blankets.
  - Keep soft objects, stuffed toys, or loose bedding out of sleep area.
  - Make sure that nothing covers the baby's head.
  - Avoid letting the baby overheat during sleep. Dress him or her in light clothes, and keep the room at comfortable temperature.
  - Do not let anyone smoke near your baby.
  - Use tummy time when baby is awake and someone is watching.
  - Offer a pacifier—do not force. If breastfeeding, wait to offer a pacifier until the age of 1 month.
  - Avoid products with claims to help prevent SIDS.
  - Prevent flat spots on baby's head by alternating the direction your baby's head faces.
- IV. The client/caregiver can discuss measures to help cope with the loss of infant.**
- Seek emotional support of others.
  - Support groups can be helpful, but not for everyone. Find a friend or counselor to discuss feelings and emotions.
  - Keep yourself open to the communication of friends and family. Many people want to help, but they do not know what to say or do.
  - Keep communication open between parents. Seek help and counseling if needed.
  - Allow time to grieve. Be kind to yourself, and discuss possible feelings of guilt or helplessness with family or professional grief counselor.

(Continued)

**RESOURCES**

Back to Sleep  
800-505-CRIB  
E-mail: NICHDIRC@mail.nih.gov  
Support groups  
Clergy

**REFERENCES**

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