

# OCTOBER IS SIDS AWARENESS MONTH

## What is SIDS?

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the diagnosis given for the sudden death of an infant younger than one year of age that remains unexplained after a thorough case investigation. SIDS is one of the leading causes of death in infants between one month and one year of age. Most SIDS deaths occur between the ages of two and four months. The cause of SIDS is unknown but there are things you can do to reduce your baby's risk of SIDS.

## Who is at risk for SIDS?

### Babies who:

- Sleep on their stomachs.
- Are bedsharing.
- Are born to mothers who smoke during and after pregnancy.
- Are born to mothers who had no or late prenatal care.
- Are placed to sleep on soft surfaces such as soft mattress containing fluffy and loose bedding. This includes items such as pillows, quilts, and other soft surfaces.



## What you can do to reduce the risks of SIDS

- Back to sleep for every sleep.
- Use a firm sleep surface covered by a fitted sheet.
- Dress your baby in light sleep clothing such as a one-piece sleeper, and do not use a blanket.
- Keep soft objects, toys, and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area.
- Your baby should not sleep in a bed or on a couch or chair with adults or other children.
- Be careful when breastfeeding in bed or any situation where you may fall asleep with your baby while breastfeeding.
- Do not smoke or let anyone smoke around your baby.
- Pregnant women should receive regular prenatal care.
- Avoid alcohol and illicit drug use during pregnancy and after birth.

### More Information:

Luz Beatriz Arboleda-Babcock, RN, BSN, PHN  
Fetal and Infant Health Programs  
Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division  
Health Promotion Bureau  
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health  
[lbabcock@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:lbabcock@ph.lacounty.gov)  
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/mch/sids/sids.htm>