



## Jackson County Department of Public Health

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### JCDPH PROMOTES SAFE SLEEP PROGRAM DURING SUIDS/SAFE SLEEP AWARENESS MONTH

The Jackson County Department of Public Health (JCDPH) is helping to raise awareness for October as National SUIDS/Safe Sleep Awareness Month. Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) is the leading cause of death of infants between one month and one year of age. SUID is a term used to describe the sudden and unexpected death of an infant in which the cause was not obvious before investigation. There were 3,356 sudden unexpected infant deaths in the U.S. in 2020, 41 % were due to SIDS, 27% were due to SSB, and 32% were due to unknown cause. Most SIDS deaths happen when babies are between 1 month and 4 months of age. Research also shows that unsafe sleep areas, such as those that include non-fitted sheets, blankets, or stuffed toys, remain a leading cause of infant death. JCDPH wants to share tips with the community on ways to create a safer sleeping environment for your baby to prevent injury.

Ways to reduce the risk of SUIDS and promote safe sleep include:

- Babies are safest on their backs. Place your baby on his or her back for every sleep time—naps and at night.
- Use a firm, flat sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety-approved crib, covered by a fitted sheet with no other bedding or soft items in the sleep area.
- Breastfeed your baby to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Share your room with your baby. Keep baby in your room close to your bed, but on a separate surface designed for infants, ideally for baby's first year, but at least for the first 6 months.
- Do not put soft objects, toys, crib bumpers, or loose bedding under baby, over baby, or anywhere in baby's sleep area.
- Do not let your baby get too hot during sleep. Babies need to sleep in a cooler environment—75 degrees or less.
- Do not smoke during pregnancy and do not smoke or allow smoking around your baby or in your baby's environment.
- Consider giving your baby a pacifier for naps and nighttime sleep to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Give your baby plenty of tummy time when he or she is awake and someone is watching.
- Avoid products that go against safe sleep recommendations, especially those that claim to prevent or reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Do not use heart or breathing monitors to reduce the risk of SIDS.



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- Follow guidance from your healthcare provider on your baby's vaccines and regular health checkups.

The JCDPH participates in the NC SIDS Grief Counseling Program and has a trained SIDS grief counselor on staff. The SIDS grief counselor supports families when an infant death occurs in Jackson County. For more questions on the program or safe sleep practices please call 828-586-8994.

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