

Pediatric Disorders: Quality Improvement

Sophia James

Lakeview College of Nursing

Dr. Ariel Wright

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Pediatric Disorders

Sadly, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is a common, undiagnosable disease that occurs in infants younger than one year. To this day, the causes of SIDS remain unexplained after an autopsy, death scene investigation, and review of clinical history (Marcdante et al., 2019). It is the healthcare team's responsibility to warn and educate new parents about this sudden disease properly. Healthcare professionals can focus on quality improvement to monitor care processes' outcomes and continuously improve healthcare systems' safety and quality (QSEN Institute, 2020, Table 4). The goal of quality improvement for sudden infant death syndrome is to decline the number of deaths during the first couple of months of an infant's life and to promote safety interventions to reduce the risk of SIDS becoming possible. Proper sleep education for infants is the most common intervention to help promote improvement for sudden infant death syndrome (Jullien, 2021).

Article Summary

Sudden unexpected infant death (SUID) is a broad term that categorizes any unexplained death in infancy, including sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), accidental suffocation or strangulation, and more (Jullien, 2021). "When the cause of death after case investigation is not attributed to any explained cause, it is classified as SIDS" (Jullien, 2021). Even though there is no identifiable cause for SIDS, recent studies have evaluated risk factors that can put a child at risk. "The risk of SIDS is higher in male, premature, and low birth weight infants" (Marcdante et al., 2019). Some ways nurses can implement quality improvement care is by teaching proper education to parents about proper sleeping techniques, respiratory needs of infants, and exposure to drugs in the environment of the new infant. These are some modifiable and nonmodifiable risk factors associated with this disease.

Proper sleeping positions for new infants are a huge modifiable risk factor all new parents should understand. The child should always be placed in a supine (entirely on the back) position until age one (Jullien, 2021). “This is the main modifiable risk factor for SIDS” (Jullien, 2021). Implementing laying a child on their full-back during all resting periods will aid in protecting against SIDS. Another sleeping recommendation to further prevent SIDS is having the infant sleep on a firm, clutter-free surface. “Soft sleeping surfaces have consistently been reported as a risk factor of SIDS due to the risk of suffocation and choking” (Jullien, 2021).

To add to the modifiable risk factors, having the child exposed to a smoking and drug environment will increase their risk of developing SIDS. “While the infant is in utero and has frequent exposure to maternal smoking, it can alter their heart rate and arousal response” (Marcdante et al., 2019). A portion of SIDS deaths are related to prolonged Q-T intervals, abnormal CNS control due to brainstem abnormalities, and maturational delay related to neural control (Marcdante et al., 2019). It is advised to parents to keep their children in smoke-free environments and out of the presence of illicit drugs and alcohol.

A non-modifiable risk factor for SIDS includes the respiratory and CO₂ status of the infant. Respiratory distress syndrome (RDS) is the most common cause of neonatal mortality, killing 40,000 neonates yearly in the United States alone (Willis, 2020). RDS develops when the alveolar collapse due to the lack of lipoproteins in the alveoli and bronchioles, leading to inadequate alveolar ventilation and hypoxia (Willis, 2020). “Episodes of hypoxia contribute to delaying the arousal response when oxygen availability is decreased, potentially leading to a sudden death” (Willis, 2020).

Introduction (note that the key points is flush to the far left *delete this comment)

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Overview

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References

Jullien, S. (2021). Sudden infant death syndrome prevention. *BMC Pediatrics*, 21(1), 320. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12887-021-02536-z>

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<https://www.r2library.com/Resource/Title/1975107721/ch0002s0256>

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