Safe Sleep & SIDS

By Yagnaram Ravichandran, MD and Katie Muth

IDENTIFY

• Prone or side sleeping position
• Maternal smoking during pregnancy
• Environmental tobacco smoke
• Overheating
• Soft sleep surface
• Late or no prenatal care
• Young maternal age
• Prematurity or LBW
• Male sex
• African American or American Indian

INQUIRE

• Any sudden death that occurs before 1 year of age in a previously healthy infant
• Cause of death unexplained after a thorough investigation, including a complete autopsy, death scene investigation, and review of child’s health history
• A diagnosis of exclusion

DO

• Place infants supine (on their backs) to sleep until they are at least 1 year of age
• Allow an infant that can roll to remain in whatever position is assumed while sleeping
• Put infants to sleep on a firm crib mattress covered by a fitted sheet with no soft toys, pillows, or extra blankets
• Dress infants appropriately for the environment, with no greater than 1 layer more than an adult would wear to be comfortable

DO NOT

• Force the use of a pacifier, reinsert it, hang it around the baby’s neck, or attach stuffed toys to it as these are choking hazards
• Put infants to sleep in adult beds because there is a risk of entrapment and suffocation
• Expose infants to second-hand smoke
• Use apnea monitors as a strategy to prevent SIDS

DISPOSITION

If SIDS is suspected:

• Call the coroner
• Make a CPS referral
• Inform a social worker
• Document extensively and diligently

PEM NUGGETS

• Healthy babies always sleep on their backs and have only one baby per crib.
• Monitor sleeping babies and supervise tummy time for awake babies.
• Teach staff about safe sleep policies and practices.
• Provide parents with safe sleep policies.