

SIDS in the Emergency Room

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Fighting To End The Tragedy of SIDS
for Brian - 6/01/04 ~ 9/28/04

SIDS in the Emergency Room

- 777 infant deaths in Virginia in 2005
- 90 Sudden Infant Death Syndrome deaths
- 13 undetermined cause of infant death
- 23 accidental infant deaths
- 104 Infant deaths in Washington D.C. in 2004
- 9 SIDS deaths

SIDS in the Emergency Room

- SIDS is the sudden and unexpected death of an apparently healthy infant whose death remains unexplained after the performance of an autopsy, a death scene investigation and a review of the infant's medical history. (NICHD)
- SIDS is the leading cause of death among infants from one month to one year of age.
- About 4500 deaths a year in the U.S. both SIDS and SUDI

SIDS in the Emergency Room

- SIDS is NOT
 - Child abuse
 - Caused by immunizations
 - Contagious
 - Hereditary
(although genetic indicators have recently been identified)



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Likely cause of SIDS is abnormality in medulla, abnormal serotonin system regulating respiration, temperature, heart rate and blood pressure
- SIDS babies don't respond to hypoxia and die in their sleep

SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Initial Care
 - Evaluate the child, institute resuscitation if appropriate
 - It is reassuring for parents to know that everything possible is being done



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Medical Evaluation and Diagnosis
 - Before giving the family a diagnosis, review information provided by parents, caretakers, police, and EMS.
 - SIDS diagnosis can only be made after autopsy.



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Other causes of sudden, unexpected death
 - Infections: sepsis, meningitis, encephalitis, pneumonia, botulism
 - Cardiac disease: myocarditis, congenital disease, sudden arrhythmia, long QT
 - Aspiration, airway obstruction
 - Injury
 - Congenital anomalies or genetic disorders, MCAD
 - Abuse

SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Presumptive Diagnosis of SIDS
 - An apparently well baby, with mild URI, under one year of age, died during sleep



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- The medical examiner must be notified and makes final decision regarding autopsy and diagnosis
 - SIDS diagnosis: absence of diagnostic conditions
 - Positive findings of intrathoracic petechiae, mild pulmonary edema, minor inflammatory changes in the airway
 - SIDS is final diagnosis in 85% of sudden unexplained infant deaths

SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Informing the Parents
 - “One possible cause of your baby’s death is sudden infant death syndrome. An autopsy must be performed to establish the cause of death.”



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Parents will be in a state of shock, and may have a difficult time assimilating information.
- Provide adequate information, but only as much as they can handle.



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Parent Support
 - Families and parents respond in individual ways to grief and shock.
 - A member of the ER team should stay with the parents as much as possible to provide support and answer questions.
 - A social worker, chaplain or counselor may be contacted for crisis intervention

SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Parents may scream, collapse or show no emotion at all.
- Encourage parents to talk about the child
- Use the child's name



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Parents should be encouraged to see and hold their child
 - Assists with focusing on the reality of death
 - Gives them an opportunity to say good-bye
 - Either remove resuscitative equipment or make it unobtrusive if possible
 - Staff person may stay with family if necessary



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Contact absent family members or clergy for family support
- Provide mementos for the family: footprint, bracelet, picture,
- in accordance with medical examiner's policies



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Funeral arrangements
 - Many young families are unfamiliar with funeral arrangements.
 - Let them know that a funeral director will be responsible for the baby's body after its release by the medical examiner



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Bereavement Counseling and Follow-up
 - Provide the family with information
 - SIDS Mid-Atlantic www.sidsma.org for bereavement information
 - Virginia SIDS Alliance www.vasids.org
 - SIDS Survival Guide, other books and pamphlets
 - Local grief counselors
 - Peer support from other SIDS parents, support groups
 - Review of autopsy results

SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Emergency Team Conference
 - Staff may wish to meet to discuss case and their feelings regarding the baby's death
 - Emotional drain on staff
 - Evaluate intervention strategies with families
 - Supportive care in crisis period



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Checklist
 - Resuscitation
 - Staff person assigned to family members
 - Primary care physician notified
 - Medical examiner notified
 - Clergy called if parents desired
 - Family notification of death and medical examiner autopsy

SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Checklist continued
 - Family encouraged to see and hold infant
 - Performance of cultural or religious rituals
 - Family given keepsakes: i.e. footprints
 - Family allowed to express grief
 - Family understands they will be contacted about autopsy and given contact number for M.E.
 - Funeral and burial choices discussed

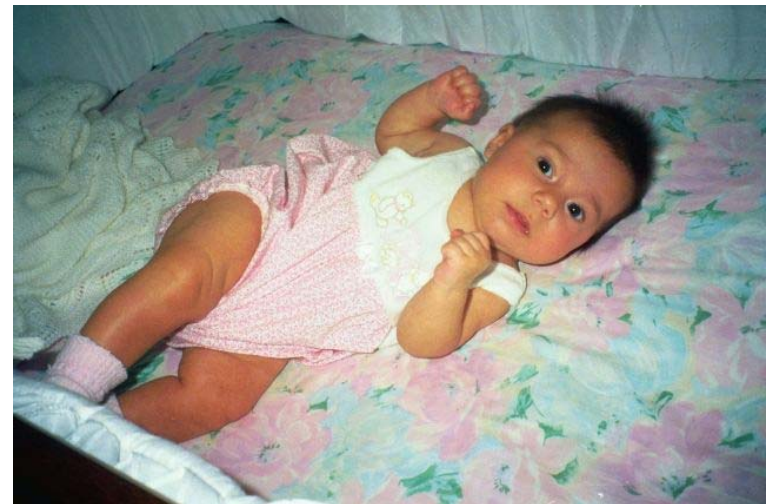
SIDS in the Emergency Room

- Checklist continued
 - SIDS literature given to family
 - Family informed of bereavement counseling



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- SIDS Mid-Atlantic
 - Bereavement counseling
 - Support groups
 - Website www.sidsma.org



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- SIDS Mid-Atlantic
 - Peer Support
 - Newsletter
 - Memorial Service



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- SIDS Mid-Atlantic
 - Education
 - Child Care Providers
 - Smoking Cessation
 - Family events



SIDS in the Emergency Room

- SIDS Mid-Atlantic
 - Cribs for Kids
 - Subsequent Pregnancy

