

Do You Know The ABCs Of Safe Sleep For Babies?

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O'FALLON — Unsafe sleep is a leading cause of death for children one-year-old and younger. These deaths often happen during sleep or in the baby's sleep area. Sudden unexpected deaths include sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), accidental suffocation in a sleeping environment, and other deaths from unknown causes.

During SIDS awareness month in October, colleagues from HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital Women and Infants Center want to educate parents in the metro-east to ensure safe sleep for infants.

“Every mom who delivers at St. Elizabeth’s Women and Infants Center is educated about the risk factors associated with infant mortality, and we work both within the hospital and with community partners to increase this important education. Together, we provide needed resources for our mothers and families to continue to improve outcomes and keep babies safe,” said Amanda Schaefer, MSN, RN, interim nurse manager of St. Elizabeth’s Women and Infants Center.

St. Elizabeth’s Hospital is also recognized by the National Safe Sleep Hospital Certification Program, created by Cribs for Kids, as a Bronze Safe Sleep Hospital. The hospital additionally provides a safe sleep swaddler for every delivered baby thanks to a grant from HSHS St. Elizabeth’s Foundation.

What are the ABCs of Safe Sleep? Shaefer shared, “The answer is Alone, on their Backs, in a Safe Crib.”

- Babies should always sleep alone. If moms are breastfeeding, soothe the baby back to sleep while standing and return to the crib when they are asleep.
- Always place babies on their back to sleep.
- A baby should sleep in a crib with a firm mattress covered by a tightly fitted sheet. Babies can die while sleeping in adult beds, couches, pillows, blankets, and other soft surfaces as well as in car seats, bouncy seats, and infant swings. It is also important to keep stuffed animals, crib bumpers, and other items out of the crib.

Parents, grandparents, babysitters, and anyone else involved with the care of an infant are encouraged to be educated on the risks and safe sleep habits by visiting <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/sids/conditioninfo/reduce>.