



BACK TO SLEEP

BY BETH VINSON

Helping keep your baby safe from SIDS

Your brand-new baby is due to arrive soon. The nursery has come together nicely, Mom has her suitcase packed, and Grandma is hurrying to get the baby blanket crocheted. But relax, Grandma ... you'll have a little extra time to get that blanket done, because the baby won't need it at the hospital.

Salina Regional Health Center's Birth Center is no longer using baby blankets, but rather will be putting your brand-new baby in a Halo SleepSack while at the hospital.

Salina Regional's Birth Center staff received significant education on SIDS prevention from

the Kansas SIDS organization and is modeling the "back is best" concept to patients.

WHAT IS SIDS?

SIDS stands for "sudden infant death syndrome." This term describes the sudden, unexplained death of an infant younger than 1 year old. Some people call SIDS "crib death" because many babies who die of SIDS are found in their cribs. But cribs don't cause SIDS.

Blankets can move around in the crib and get caught up around a baby's face or even cover the baby's face while sleeping, increasing the risk of



Kevin Poland, Salina, and his newborn son, Kade, use the new Halo SleepSack.

SIDS. The Halo SleepSack is a wearable blanket with a zip front closure for easy changing. The design eliminates the need for loose blankets in the bed and encourages caregivers to place their babies on their backs for sleep. And the SleepSack swaddles the babies to prevent the startle reflex.

Kathy Stineman, R.N., of the Birth Center says that she has received nothing but positive responses from new parents. "Everyone I talk to about it when I put their baby in them loves the idea and is thankful for the information."

BABIES SLEEP SAFEST ON THEIR BACKS

In addition to the new Halo SleepSacks, parents and caregivers will be encouraged to watch a new video about safe sleeping. The SIDS Network and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment collaborated to create the ABC's of Safe Sleep for Babies (Alone, on the Back, in a Crib.)

One of the easiest ways to lower your baby's risk of SIDS is to put him or her on the back to sleep, for naps and at night. Healthcare providers used to think that babies should sleep on their stomachs, but research now shows that babies are less likely to die of SIDS when they sleep on their backs. Placing your baby on his or her back to sleep is the No. 1 way to reduce the risk of SIDS.

"Grandparents tell us all the time they didn't know babies should sleep on their backs," says Brenda Moffitt, director of Women and Children's Services at the hospital. "They remember back when babies were always laid to sleep on their stomachs. That's why we encourage parents to tell grandparents, babysitters and any other caregivers to always place their babies on their backs to sleep in order to reduce the risk of SIDS."

SIDS AWARENESS

SIDS is the leading cause of death in infants between 1 month and 1 year of age. Salina Regional's Birth Center staff is dedicated to teaching new parents about SIDS in an effort to reduce the number of babies who die of it. Information will be sent home with new parents as a reminder about SIDS prevention.

Halo SleepSacks can be purchased in the hospital's Gift Shop so that parents can continue good sleep habits once their babies are home from the hospital.

And parents can also go to nichd.nih.gov/ SIDS for more information about SIDS awareness and prevention. 📺

Take a Birthing Class

Salina Regional Health Center offers Childbirth Classes and Infant Feeding Classes. Print the registration form by going to srhc.com and clicking "Women & Children's Services." Or call the Birth Center at **785-452-6555**.

SAFE SLEEP TOP 10

What can I do to lower my baby's risk of SIDS?

1 Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night. This position is the safest, and every sleep time counts.

2 Place your baby on a firm sleep surface, such as on a safety-approved crib mattress, covered by a fitted sheet. Never place your baby to sleep on pillows, quilts, sheepskins or other soft surfaces.

3 Keep soft objects, toys, and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area. Don't use pillows, blankets, quilts, sheepskins, or pillow-like crib bumpers in your baby's sleep area, and keep all items away from your baby's face.

4 Do not allow smoking around your baby. Don't smoke before or after the birth of your baby, and don't let others smoke around your baby.

5 Keep your baby's sleep area close to, but separate from, where you and others sleep. Your baby should not sleep in a bed or on a couch or armchair with adults or other children, but he or she can sleep in the same room as you do. If you bring your baby into bed with you to breastfeed, put him or her back in a separate sleep area, such as a bassinet, crib or cradle when finished.

6 Think about using a clean, dry pacifier when placing your infant down to sleep, but don't force the baby to take it. (If you are breastfeeding, wait until your child is 1 month old or is used to breastfeeding before using a pacifier.)

7 Do not let your baby overheat during sleep. Dress your baby in light sleep clothing, and keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for an adult.

8 Avoid products that claim to reduce the risk of SIDS because most have not been tested for effectiveness or safety.

9 Do not use home monitors to reduce the risk of SIDS. If you have questions about using monitors for other conditions, talk to your healthcare provider.

10 Reduce the chance that flat spots will develop on your baby's head. Provide "tummy time" when your baby is awake and someone is watching; change the direction that your baby lies in the crib from one week to the next; and avoid too much time in car seats, carriers and bouncers.