



PRAMS

Ohio PRAMS Fact Sheet: Infant Sleeping Position

Background

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is currently the leading cause of postneonatal infant death in the United States. SIDS occurs when an infant less than one year of age dies suddenly from an undetermined cause despite a thorough investigation including an autopsy and a review of the infant's clinical and family history.⁵ Over 2,000 infants in the United States die of SIDS each year.⁵

Researchers have determined that benefits exist for infants sleeping in the supine (back) position, rather than prone (stomach) position. A clear decrease in the SIDS rate in the United States has been directly correlated to a decline in the number of infants placed to sleep in the prone position.² Risks of not placing an infant in the supine position include reduced pulmonary function and reduced oxygenation.⁶

Nationally, certain maternal sociodemographic characteristics have been associated with failure to place infants in the supine

sleep position. These include young age, smoking, low educational level, high parity and race.⁵ Black and Hispanic women are less likely to place their infants in the supine position than white women. Studies have shown that a smaller percentage of black infants are put to sleep on their backs than Hispanic or white infants.³

In the United States, the Back to Sleep Campaign has had a large influence on reducing the number of infants left to sleep in the prone position. Since it began in 1994, the number of infants sleeping in the supine position increased by 70 percent. In turn, the SIDS rate in the United States decreased by 50 percent.²

Despite recommendations by health officials, myths about the safety of the supine position, such as a greater risk of choking or suffocation, exist. However it is unlikely that infants will experience serious aspiration episodes when sleeping in the supine position. Research has shown that concern for choking while an infant is on his or her back is largely unsubstantiated.²

Ohio Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System

Data Highlights:

- > Approximately 72 percent of Ohio mothers surveyed placed their infant on his or her back to sleep.
- > As maternal age increased, the percentage of infants who slept on their backs rose as well, with mothers 35 and older reporting the highest percentage.
- > Black mothers were less likely to put their infant to sleep on his or her back than mothers of other races.
- > Women with 12 or more years of education were more likely to report their infant sleeping on their back.
- > Mothers who received Medicaid and those who were unmarried were less likely to place infants on their backs.

* 95 percent confidence interval

Source: 2006-2008 Ohio Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System, Center for Public Health Statistics and Informatics, Ohio Department of Health, 2010.

Infant Sleeping Position in Ohio, 2006-2008

Maternal Characteristic	Percent Who Put Infant on Back to Sleep	95% CI*
Overall (n)	72.1 (2824)	70.3 - 73.9
Years of Age		
Less than 20	60.8	54.6 - 66.7
20-24	69.4	65.4 - 73.1
25-34	74.4	71.9 - 76.7
35+	78.6	73.7 - 82.7
Race		
Non-Hispanic White	74.9	72.7 - 77.0
Non-Hispanic Black	57.2	54.0 - 60.3
Hispanic	75.9	64.2 - 84.7
Non-Hispanic Other	74.9	63.5 - 83.6
Marital Status		
Married	76.4	74.1 - 78.6
Unmarried	65.6	62.5 - 68.6
Education		
Less than 12 years	60.2	54.5 - 65.6
12 years	71.9	68.2 - 75.3
More than 12 years	75.9	73.7 - 78.0
Payment for Prenatal Care		
Medicaid	68.1	64.9 - 71.1
Non-Medicaid	74.6	72.3 - 76.7
Number of Previous Live Births		
None	72.3	69.4 - 75.0
One or more	72.6	70.1 - 74.9

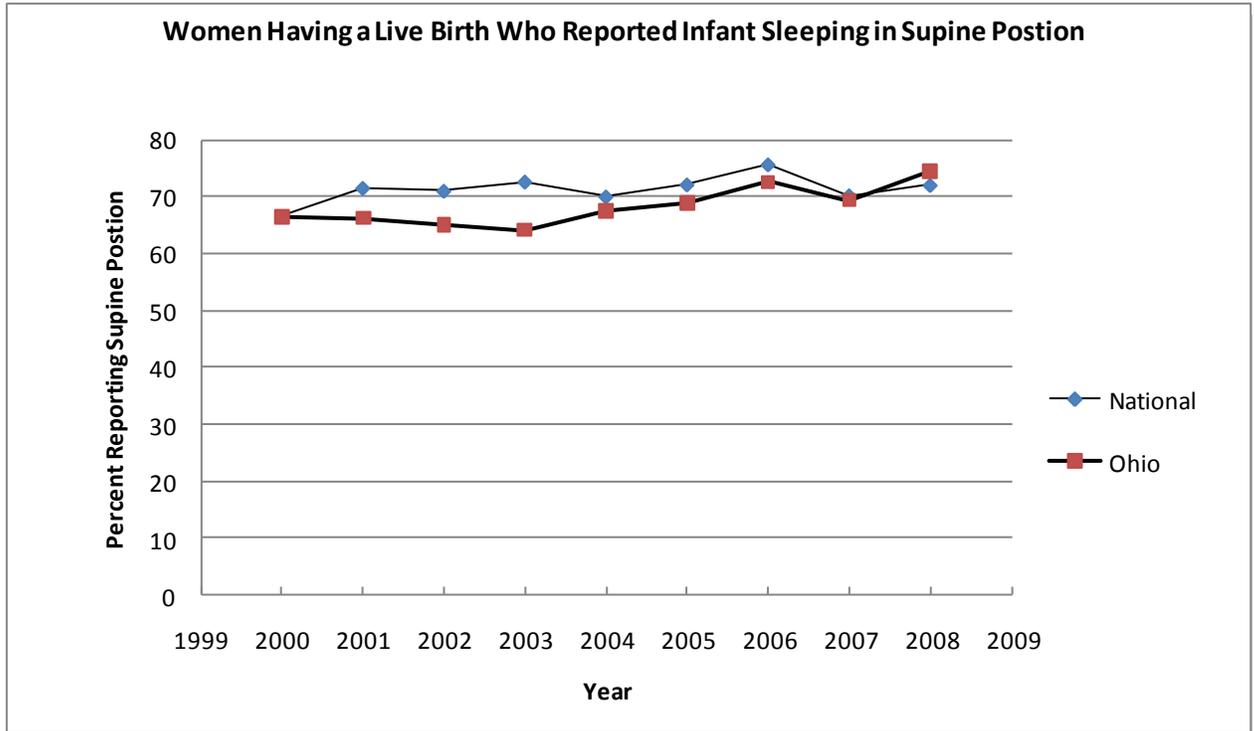




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Ohio Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System



Source: Ohio Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System, Center for Public Health Statistics and Informatics, Ohio Department of Health, 2010 and The National Infant Sleep Position Survey, 2008.

- Healthy People provides 10 year national objectives for improving the health of all Americans. The Healthy People 2020 Objective MICH-20 states “Increase the proportion of infants who are put to sleep on their backs.” The target is 75.9 percent.¹ Ohio is showing progress toward meeting this goal, with 74.5 percent of mothers putting infants to sleep on their backs in 2008.

- As shown in the graph above, in most years the percentage of mothers who placed their child in the supine sleeping position was slightly lower in Ohio than the national average.

- Factors that influence whether caregivers place infants on their backs to sleep include whether or not a physician recommended the infant always sleep supine, a fear that the infant could choke while sleeping on their back and concerns about the infant’s comfort.²

- In the United States, SIDS is the leading cause of death among infants aged 1-12 months. It remains the third leading cause of infant mortality despite the overall 50 percent decrease in the rate of SIDS in the United States since the 1990s.⁵

- In countries around the world where public health campaigns for supine infant sleeping have been implemented, a decrease of 50 percent in SIDS has been seen in only 1-2 years after the program began.⁶

- One of the most influential programs established thus far in the United States has been the Back to Sleep Campaign. The campaign was implemented in June of 1994. It focuses on the education of parents, caregivers and health care providers on behaviors that can aid in reducing the risk of SIDS, such as supine sleeping.²

To obtain more information on SIDS prevention please visit: <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids/> or for information specific to SIDS and infant sleeping position in Ohio, please visit: <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/cfhs/sid/sids1.aspx>

References:

¹ Maternal, Infant, Child Health. (n.d.). Retrieved January 5, 2011, from Healthy People 2020: <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/default.aspx>

² NIH News- Study Links Factors to Choice of Infant Sleep Position. (2009, December 7). Retrieved January 4, 2010, from Eunice Kennedy Shriver- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development: www.nichd.nih.gov/new/releases/12079-infant_sleep_position.cfm?renderforprint=1

³ Pollack, H. A., & Frohna, J. G. (2002, April). Infant Sleep Placement After the Back to Sleep Campaign. *Pediatrics*, 608-614.

⁴ Questions and Answers for Professionals. (n.d.). Retrieved January 7, 2011, from National Institute of Child Health and Human Development: <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sids/>

⁵ Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID): Home. (2009, May 17). Retrieved January 5, 2011, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/SIDS/index.htm>

⁶ Willinger, M., Hoffman, H., Wu, K.-T., Hou, J.-R., Kessler, R., Ward, S., et al. (1998). Factors Associated With the Transition to Nonprone Sleep Positions of Infants in the United States. *Original Contributions*, 329-335.

