

Checklist for Emergency Room Staff

- Explain the SIDS diagnosis.**
 - Always refer to the baby by name.
 - Make eye contact, when appropriate.
 - Make sure that the parents understand that the diagnosis of SIDS does not occur until after the autopsy and investigation.

- Explain that the coroner will answer any questions they have.**
 - Let them know when the coroner is coming, and if there will be any delay.

- Ask the parents if they need a pastor, priest, rabbi or other spiritual leader.**
 - There may be other people they would like to call for support.
 - Help where it is appropriate.

- Give parents a chance to hold the baby.***
 - Let them have a quiet time in a private place.
 - Explain what they may see, the appearance of the body, tubes, etc.
 - As you bring them the baby, hold the baby as you would if he/she were alive.
 - Wrap the baby with a warm blanket.
 - Do not cover the baby's face.
 - With the coroner's permission, or according to local protocol, give parents mementos of the baby—a lock of hair, a picture, hand and footprints.
 - Save the baby's clothing in an envelope or clean paper bag (the baby's smell will last longer).

- Ask the mother how she was feeding the baby.**
 - If the mother was breastfeeding, talk about the options.
 - Refer to a lactation consultant or La Leche League.

- Ask about other children.**
 - Make sure they are cared for and someone is available to attend to their needs.
 - Emphasize the importance of honest answers to questions.
 - Give booklet *Helping Children Grieve*.

- Ask parents about transportation home.**
 - Assess their ability to drive.
 - Offer to call a friend or family member or a cab.

- Provide SIDS information and resources.**
 - Give booklet *A Loving Good-Bye: A Guide to Arranging the Funeral for Your Baby* and the *SIDS Bookmark*.
 - Give the number of the local SIDS County Coordinator (PHN) and the California SIDS Program 800-369-SIDS (7437). Write the phone number of the PHN on the *SIDS Bookmark*.

* These activities are to be conducted in accordance with local coroner's protocol.



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