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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
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October is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is defined as the sudden death of an infant who is less than one year of age that is unexpected and cannot be explained after a thorough case investigation including a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the infant's clinical history.

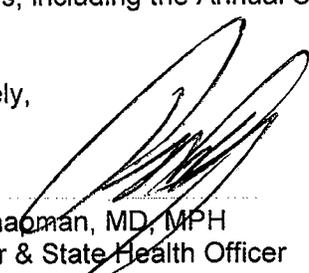
In 2012, 164 infants less than one year of age died of SIDS in California, making it the second leading cause of mortality for infants between 28 days of age to less than one year of age. Despite years of research, the exact cause(s) of SIDS remain unknown.

To help reduce sudden, unexpected death in infancy, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the California SIDS Advisory Council endorses the 2011 American Academy of Pediatrics (AAPs) recommendations to educate parents and the public through messages that can reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related infant deaths. Recommendations include placing babies to sleep on their backs, placing babies on a firm sleep surface, room-sharing without bed-sharing, never smoking around the baby, not letting a baby overheat during sleep, and keeping soft objects out of a baby's sleep area. Prenatal care, breastfeeding, immunizations and regular well-child checks are also important recommendations.

The CDPH works with Local Health Jurisdictions to investigate sudden unexpected infant deaths to identify possible contributors to the cause of death. California has earned a national reputation for excellence in SIDS education, risk reduction campaigns, grief and bereavement support services, and research.

During the month of October, CDPH promotes SIDS Awareness through a variety of outreach activities, including the Annual SIDS Conference, to increase public awareness about SIDS.

Sincerely,



Ron Chapman, MD, MPH
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