

FACTS AND FIGURES: MA Center for Unexpected Infant and Child Death

What is SUID?


Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) is the death of an infant less than 1 year of age that occurs suddenly and unexpectedly. The cause of death is not immediately obvious before investigation.

SUID includes all unexpected deaths: those without a clear cause, such as SIDS, and those from a known cause, such as suffocation. One-half of all SUID cases are SIDS.

Definition: Sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age which remains unexplained after a thorough autopsy and case investigation.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is NOT the cause of every infant death

What is SIDS?

 SIDS is NOT...

It is NOT:

- the same as suffocation and is not caused by suffocation
- caused by vaccines, immunizations, or shots
- contagious
- the result of neglect or child abuse
- caused by cribs
- caused by vomiting or choking

Why are these
terms
interchanged
so much?

In recent years, medical examiners have drastically reduced listing SIDS as a cause of death.

The term "syndrome" in SIDS incorrectly implies a diagnosis or illness, when it is actually a diagnosis of exclusion.

Confusion is common because there is no national standard terminology for sudden and unexpected infant deaths AND because medical examiners are less likely to list SIDS as the cause of death.

Most infant deaths occur suddenly, and people are usually more familiar with the term SIDS than they are familiar with the term SUID. Therefore, it is often assumed that if the death is sudden, then it's SIDS.

Produced by: The Massachusetts Center for Unexpected Infant and Child Death

We support families, communities, and professionals after an unexpected death during pregnancy, infancy, or early childhood. Please visit <http://www.magriecenter.org>

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov>

