

SIDS

Wives Tales, Ignorance, Prejudices & Downright Slander

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Originally Printed in: I.C.P.A. Newsletter May/June 1997

While "surfing the net" one evening I came across the website: "Child Secure- Big Safety for Little Kids". Its main article, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, drew my attention even closer. Their definition began with, "SIDS is the death of an apparently healthy infant that remains unexplained after a thorough autopsy and death scene investigation . SIDS is the leading killer of infants between one week and one year with an approximate rate of 2 per thousand live births. Six to Seven thousand babies die of SIDS every year in the US . The peak age is 2-4 months and the majority of the deaths occur during the winter months. Researchers believe that SIDS probably has more than one cause, although the final process appears to be similar in most cases. SIDS cannot be predicted, prevented or reversed."

Although this last statement may sound a bit foreboding and hopeless, the American Academy of Pediatrics & the National Institute of Child Health & Human Development are now recommending babies sleep on their backs only. (It's sort of a preventative note even though they say nothing can prevent it.) And yet they will continue on with ... *"It is important to state that SIDS continues to be an unsolved problem."*

As chiropractors, I do hope you are beginning to draw a slight correlation here. How many of you have made connections between the stomach sleepers in your office and their inability to hold cervical adjustments? How many of you used to sleep on your stomach before you realized it was rotating your neck into an unnatural, subluxating position? If you haven't had the experience, give it a try. I recommend you do so when you know you will be having your spine checked the next day -you will need it. Parenting six children and both being chiropractors, my husband and I never considered the option of turning our infants' necks to the side so they could lie on their stomachs. Even though the "medical opinion of our day" recommended this posture to prevent vomit aspiration, it seemed anatomically and chiropractically unsound.

Now, the amusing factor in all of this is the ignorant sector of the medical profession's inability to correlate the relationship between the twisting of the cervical spine and its affects to an already traumatized spinal cord from birth. This is perhaps because they say they do thorough autopsies on SIDS kids, but when you read more in depth research on infant spinal injury correlated with SIDS, it is revealed this type of in depth analysis escapes most SIDS autopsies. Often the spine is considered uninjured if there appears to be an absence of mechanical injury to the cervical / thoracic spine. [1] A closer look on the part of many researchers in various studies revealed spinal cord hemorrhage to be the principal lesion. [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] Frequently, trauma had been "so mild that it escaped recognition".

If, therefore, this medical sector is not even conscious of the subtle, sometimes fatal injuries caused by the birth process, how can they begin to recognize the cause of SIDS? What complicates the matter even more is that their very own recommended modes of birthing are the very causes of the spinal injury ! [\[7\]](#) [\[8\]](#) [\[9\]](#) It is no wonder that they refuse to admit what the correlation may be between SIDS and sleeping on the stomach. Admitting to its connection would only place them liable when parents would question why their child had spinal cord hemorrhage to begin with!

As Doctors of Chiropractic, it is obvious to us that sleeping on the stomach may aggravate an already traumatized infant spinal cord. The initial birth trauma incurred would only be worsened by the daily, forced rotation of the infants subluxated spine.

Now, seeing this perspective on SIDS, I do hope your confidence, commitment and concern for children has increased and you will be even more motivated to check children as soon as they are born. For those of you however, who are better stirred by emotion rather than fact, let me continue with that web sites further words of wisdom. As I scrolled down the page there appeared a section called "Old Wives Tales". It read as follows: "Many old wives tales, superstitions and just plain stupidity abound about SIDS. From chiropractors claiming 'stress on the atlas while transversing the birth canal', to stories about suffocation from the ammonia in urine, SIDS has suffered from the ignorant."

It is clear to see, they are responding from a place of fear and defense. Unfortunately they have backed themselves into a corner and are either ignorant of their own research or just plain petrified the public will become informed. It does show, however, we are getting the facts out there and they are intimidated by how they look in light of them.

All of the above named studies will be accessible to ICPA members through our website. Please, support us now as we work to bring the truths about healing and wholeness to the people. With research, education and your participation, the ICPA will continue to unite chiropractors in the mission, "Chiropractic Today for a Better World Tomorrow".

References:

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