

## **Do risk factors differ between explained sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI) and SIDS?**

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**Background:** In Germany 2910 infants died in the year 2004, for many infants the reason is clear, especially prematurity or congenital abnormalities. However 394 babies die every year suddenly and unexpectedly. The cause may be immediately clear, but more often the cause is not obvious.

**Aims:** (1) to describe the causes of explained sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI), and (2) to compare risk factors for SIDS and explained SUDI.

**Methods:** A 3 year population based case-control study in Germany, 1998-2001.

**Results:** 455 deaths, of which 51 (11.2%) were explained. The majority of these deaths were due to respiratory or generalized infections. The risk factors for SIDS and explained SUDI were remarkably similar except for sleep position and breastfeeding. Prone sleeping position is a major risk factor for SIDS (adjusted OR=7.16, 95% CI=3.85-13.31) but not for explained SUDI (adjusted OR=1.71, 95% CI=0.25-11.57). Not being breastfed in the first 2 weeks of life is a risk factor for SIDS (adjusted OR=2.37, 95% CI=1.46- 3.84) but not for explained SUDI (adjusted OR=0.39, 95% CI=0.08-1.83).

**Conclusions:** Prone sleeping position is a unique risk factor for SIDS. Socioeconomic disadvantage and maternal smoking are risk factors for both SIDS and explained SUDI, and provide an opportunity for targeted intervention.

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