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| **Descriptive analysis of sleep-surface sharing among Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths, 2010-2014** |
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| **Introduction** Sleep-surface sharing increases the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related infant deaths. At the same time, surface sharing has been associated with increased breastfeeding duration, which is a protective factor for SIDS. Infant bed-sharing remains a common practice for many caregivers. Controversy exists about the association between surface sharing and sudden unexpected infant death (SUID), and few studies have examined factors most highly associated with sleep-surface sharing by infant caregivers.  **Objective:**  To determine, among SUID cases, what infant and caregiver characteristics were most highly associated with sleep-surface sharing (e.g., bed, sofa, crib) versus sleeping alone at the time of death.  **Material and Methods** We analyzed SUID cases that occurred from 2010-2014 in states participating in the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s SUID Case Registry. The SUID Case Registry is a surveillance system with detailed information on all SUID cases and their sleep environment at time of death. Infant and caregiver characteristics were compared for those sharing a sleep surface (infant sleeping with a person or animal on any type of surface) and those that were sleeping alone on any surface at the time of death. Chi square tests were used to determine statistical significance (p<0.05).  **Results** Deaths while sleep-surface sharing (n=1085) represented 54% of all SUID cases in the study population. Among SUID cases, the percentage of sleep-surface sharing was significantly higher among infants less than 2 months of age (72%) compared to infants aged 2 to 6 months (48%) or older (31%) (p<0.05). The percentage of surface-sharing deaths was also significantly higher among: multiple births (73%) versus singleton births (52%); non-Hispanic black infants (66%) versus non-Hispanic white infants (46%); infants whose mother smoked during pregnancy or infants who were exposed to second-hand smoke (62%) versus non-exposed infants (43%); infants who had a primary caregiver with less than a high school education (62%) versus those with a high school education or more (52%); and infants whose primary caregiver received social services in the last 12 months (59% versus 41%) (p<0.05). Among SUID cases, the percentage of surface sharing was significantly higher among infants whose last meal was breastmilk (61%) versus formula (56%) (p<0.05).  **Conclusions** About half of SUID cases occurred on a shared sleep surface. Significant differences in infant and caregiver characteristics were observed between infants who were sharing a sleep surface and those sleeping alone at the time of death. Death on a shared sleep surface was more prevalent than death while sleeping alone among non-Hispanic black infants, infants less than 2 months of age, multiples, infants whose mother smoked during pregnancy or who were exposed to second-hand smoke, infants whose last meal was breastmilk, and infants with less-educated primary caregivers. Understanding the characteristics associated with surface sharing among SUID cases may inform safe sleep promotion strategies and guide interventions toward populations with the highest need. |
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