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Safe Sleep for Newborns: An Addition to the Infant Care Guide

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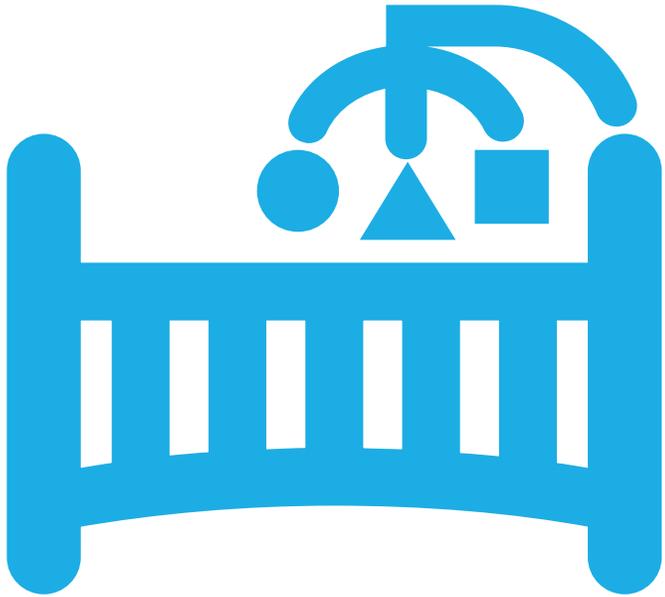
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SAFE SLEEP FOR NEWBORNS:

AN ADDITION TO THE INFANT CARE GUIDE

Charlotte Gemes, MS3

Family Medicine Rotation July 12- August 20, 2021

Preceptor: Michelle Dorwart

Problem Identification and Description of Need

- 5 years ago, Community Health Centers of Burlington (CHCB) made “Your Pregnancy Guide” a booklet aimed to give basic information to pregnant people
- The booklet was a major success and is used as a starting point by the OB nurse for patient education sessions
- Following its success, Dr. Michelle Dorwart sought to make a similar booklet aimed towards providing parents clear and concise information on infant care
- Over the past two rotations, fellow clerkship students have contributed to this booklet with topics on “Kangaroo Care” and “Vision and Eye Health” for infants
- When identifying new topics to contribute, safe sleep for newborns was a topic area that needed addressing and is often not discussed between parents and providers

Public Health Cost and Unique Cost Considerations in Host Community

- CHCB has a unique patient population with about 75% of OB patients being New Americans, as well as a significant number from Lund Home, a home for expectant mothers with substance use disorders or who have experienced abuse
- With this unique population, many new parents do not have access to information on caring for their infants whether due to not having family or friends nearby, access to the internet, language barriers, etc.
- Many parents have a myriad of questions before and after delivery, including safe sleep practices as many new parents do not know about the most recent guidelines on safe sleep

Community Perspective on Issue and Support for Project

- For this project, I spoke to provider Michelle Dorwart who highlighted the following:
 - So much of pregnancy care is devoted to pregnancy and not to parenting, leaving parents confused on many aspects of parenting in the first few months after delivery
 - In the US, there are different cultural norms of which New Americans may not be aware
 - For those who choose to co-sleep, we should highlight conditions that make co-sleeping most dangerous
- CHCB also has a dedicated OB social worker who meets with pregnant patients at least once per trimester
 - Many CHCB patients do not have access to parenting, pregnancy, or childbirth classes
 - In the third trimester, pregnant patients have a lot of questions and become very overwhelmed with all the information they receive
 - Many patients do not know where to turn to ask for guidance unless specifically sent in a certain direction. It is important to encourage patients to ask for help

Intervention and Methodology

- Spoke to providers at CHCB about the creation of the “Infant Care Guide” and what topics still needed to be addressed
- Reviewed CHCB “Your Pregnancy Guide” and previous “Infant Care Guide” chapters contributed by prior clerkship students Emma Dunne and Justin Schulz
- Conducted literature and resource review on safe sleep for infants
- Authored short chapter on safe sleep for the larger patient educational booklet on infant care

Results

Safe Sleep for Newborns

When you bring your baby home, they will do a lot of sleeping for the first few months of life. It is therefore important to make sure your baby is sleeping safely. Babies who do not sleep safely are more at risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, also known as SIDS. Here are some tips to make sure your baby is sleeping safely.

- Always make sure your baby sleeps on their back at all times, both for naps and at night. Babies should sleep only on their backs until their first birthday.
- Your baby should only sleep on firm, flat surfaces, such as a firm mattress in a safety-approved crib or bassinet. A firm surface is one that is hard and does not indent or leave a mark behind when the baby is on it. The mattress can have a fitted sheet over top of it, but no other bedding.
- There should be no soft bedding, objects, or toys near your baby when they sleep, including pillows, extra blankets, or bumper pads. These objects can block airflow or wrap around the baby while the baby is sleeping.
- Your baby should never go to sleep on soft surfaces, such as the couch, armchairs, nursing pillows, or pillow-like surfaces
- Bed-sharing (or co-sleeping) is not recommended for any babies. Babies can die from accidental suffocation or strangulation when in an adult bed or other soft sleep surface. Only bring your baby into the bed to feed or comfort, but do not fall asleep with the baby in your bed.
- Some situations make bed-sharing extra dangerous for babies. These include:
 - The sleeping surface is soft and not firm
 - There is soft bedding like pillows or blankets on the bed
 - Baby being younger than 4 months old
 - Baby born prematurely
 - Anyone in the bed being a smoker
 - Baby's mom smoked during pregnancy
 - Anyone in the bed took medicines or drugs that make it harder to wake up
 - Anyone in the bed drank alcohol
 - Sleeping in a bed with someone who is not the baby's parent
- There is not a lot of information on whether bedside or in-bed sleepers can increase risk of injury and death, so the American Academy of Pediatrics does not say whether or not they recommend them. It is best for your baby to sleep in their own crib nearby instead of in the bed with you.
- Room sharing is recommended for babies! Keeping your baby's crib or bassinet in the same room where you sleep is recommended for the first 6 months or 1 year. That way your baby is closeby for feeding, comforting, and watching the baby.

What Does A Safe Sleep Environment Look Like?

The image below shows a safe infant sleep environment.

Baby's sleep area is in the same room, next to where parents sleep.

Use a firm and flat sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety-approved crib*, covered by a fitted sheet.

Baby should not sleep in an adult bed, on a couch, or on a chair alone, with you, or with anyone else.

Do not smoke or let anyone else smoke around your baby.

Do not put pillows, blankets, sheepskins, or crib bumpers anywhere in your baby's sleep area.

Dress your baby in sleep clothing, such as a wearable blanket. Do not use a loose blanket, and do not overbundle.

Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night.

Keep soft objects, toys, and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area. Make sure nothing covers the baby's head.

  **NIH** Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

 **SAFE TO SLEEP**

* A crib, bassinet, portable crib, or play yard that follows the safety standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is recommended. For information on crib safety, contact the CPSC at 1-800-638-2772 or <http://www.cpsc.gov>.

Evaluation of Effectiveness and Limitations

- Evaluation of Infant Care Guide: Future steps should include...
 - Surveys and interviews with parents and families who received the guide on whether they found it useful, what additional topics would be helpful to include, what they would change, etc.
 - Feedback from providers in the office involved in pediatric and OB care on their thoughts on the guide, what was missing, and what additions or changes need to be made
- Limitations:
 - Time to complete the project
 - Being part of a larger resource that is not yet complete
 - Barriers to use of Infant Care Guide include multiple languages spoken among patients and patients are not always literate even in their home language

Recommendations for Future Interventions/Projects

- Completion of Infant Care Guide
 - Other topics to include in the educational booklet: Breastfeeding, Infant Bowel Habits, Postpartum Depression, Crying and Colic, Local Resources for New Parents, etc.
 - Future LCOM clerkship students can assist in authoring these chapters
- Translate Infant Care Guide into most popular languages at CHCB, including Nepali, Somali, and Swahili
- Gather feedback and conduct evaluations as noted on the previous slide

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