

ABSTRACT

THE RATE OF SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME (SIDS) CASES AND MOTHERS WHO LACKED REGULARLY SCHEDULED PRENATAL CARE VISITS IN FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA BETWEEN 1992 AND 1998

Objective. Identify and evaluate the major and contributing risk factors for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) cases among Fresno County mothers who failed to have regularly scheduled prenatal care visits during their pregnancies.

Methods. Vital statistics data from the Fresno County Health and Human Services System and epidemiologic studies of SIDS risk factors were used to evaluate SIDS deaths by the number of prenatal care visits, maternal age, infant gender, infant race, and seasonal occurrence. SIDS deaths identified as ICD code 798.0 were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and analyzed with SPSS using Pearson chi-square, Yates correction factor, and linear-by-linear association.

Results. Mortality rates indicated that there were 101 SIDS deaths in Fresno County from 1992 to 1998. The risk of SIDS was higher in infants whose mothers attended ≤ 20 prenatal care visits (48.5%), among White Hispanics (39.6%) as compared to other ethnic groups, with males (58.4%) than females, mothers ages 18-24 (48.5%), and during the winter months (34.7%).

Conclusion. Although the cause of SIDS remains unknown, risk reduction measures include placing healthy infants to sleep in the supine position, avoiding passive tobacco smoke exposure before and after delivery, eating properly, and obtaining adequate prenatal care during the course of pregnancy.

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