

## Objectives

Upon completion of this activity, the learner will be able to:

1. Describe the categories and risk factors for sudden unexpected infant death.
2. Explain approaches to improve the effectiveness of nurses' conversations with parents about infant sleep and the safe sleep recommendations.
3. Outline key interventions nurse leaders can take to improve newborn safety on their units and develop a comprehensive safe sleep program for their organization.

## Continuing Nursing Education (CNE) Credit

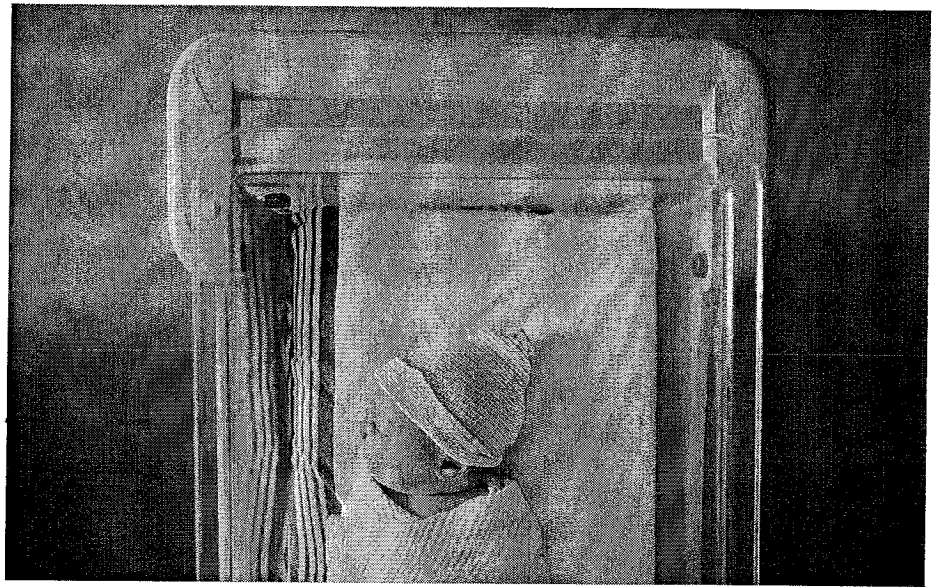
A total of 1.5 contact hours may be earned as CNE credit for reading "Nurses Leading Safe Infant Sleep Initiatives in the Hospital Setting" and for completing an online posttest and participant feedback form.

To take the test and complete the participant feedback form, please visit <http://learning.awhonn.org>. Certificates of completion will be issued on receipt of the completed participant feedback form and any processing fees.

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# Nurses Leading Safe Infant Sleep Initiatives in the Hospital Setting CNE

Sharon C. Hitchcock & Catherine Ruhl

**ABSTRACT:** Every day, 10 otherwise healthy infants die from sleep-related deaths in the United States. These deaths, termed *sudden unexpected infant death*, remain the leading cause of post-neonatal death in the United States despite known modifiable risk factors and prevention recommendations. In birthing hospitals, many parents report being given incorrect and sometimes no information about infant sleep safety, which creates immediate and long-term safety concerns. In this article, we provide an overview of sudden unexpected infant death, including sudden unexpected postnatal collapse, and the latest safe sleep recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics. We also offer practical guidelines for nurses—those working at the bedside and those in leadership positions—who may be seeking to improve the quality of infant sleep practices in their organizations.

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**KEYWORDS:** infant sleep, perinatal nurse, quality improvement, safe sleep, SIDS, skin-to-skin, sudden infant death, sudden unexpected infant death, sudden unexpected postnatal collapse

In August 2017, an \$8 million lawsuit was filed against a hospital and nurse when a newborn died after being placed in bed with a medicated mother to breastfeed. Left alone with the newborn, the mother fell asleep during the early morning breastfeeding session and awoke to find her baby unresponsive. Ultimately,

the newborn was found to have suffered severe brain damage and died (Lohr, 2017). This incident, although not the first, shines a critical light on the importance of safe infant sleep in the hospital setting, especially in light of current efforts to improve breastfeeding rates and to promote skin-to-skin contact and rooming-in (Feldman-Winter