

Sleep-Related Infant Death

A Five-Year Report, 2019–2023

In Cook County, Illinois today, sleep-related infant death occurs about once a week and is almost always related to an unsafe sleep situation.

From 2019-2023, 208 sleep-related infant deaths occurred in Cook County. This report summary details Cook County's sleep-related infant death data to inform communities, providers and families of this public health threat to infants and to encourage prevention strategies.

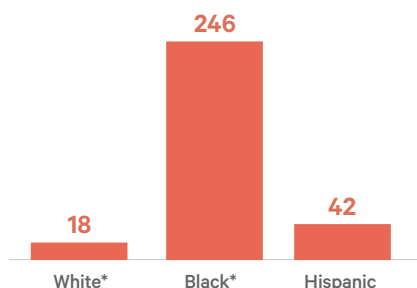
To learn more and view the full report, scan the qr code or visit rush.edu/suid.



Sleep-related infant deaths: 208

Sleep-related infant death disparities

Sleep-related infant death rate per 100,000 births
Cook County, Illinois

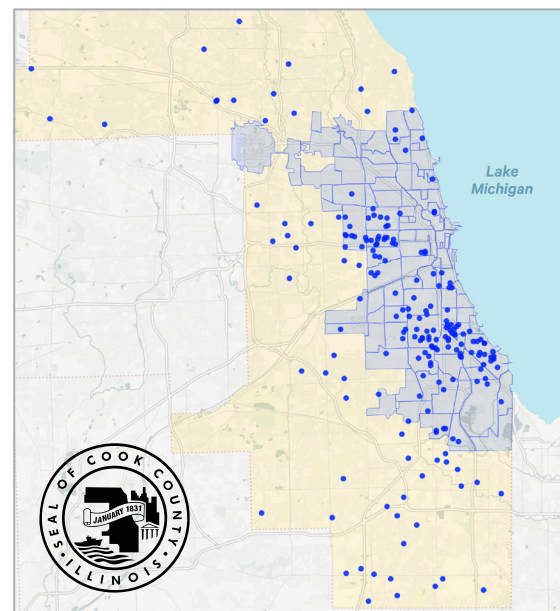


*Non-Hispanic

In Cook County, sleep-related infant death occurred **14 times** more often in Black infants, and **2.3 times** more often in Hispanic infants when compared with white infants. Families living in communities with higher hardship are impacted by housing instability, financial strain, lower access to trusted resources, and other stressors - all of which get in the way of consistently practicing safe sleep and underlie these disparities.

Geographic distribution

Though sleep-related infant death occurs throughout Cook County, mapping cases reveal a clustering of sleep-related infant death on the city and county's West and South sides.



Above: Sleep-related infant death in Cook County, 2019-2023. Each circle represents a sleep-related infant death (208). Chicago is represented in gray, while the yellow areas represent the remainder of Cook County.

Unsafe sleep factors

Hazard: Soft bedding



93%

Or **190** infants were found with soft bedding in their sleep space.

Soft bedding includes pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, blankets, bumper pads, plush toys or stuffed animals.

Hazard: Bed-sharing



66%

Or **135** infants were sleeping with another person, increasing their risk of suffocation.

Hazard: Non-crib sleeping



84%

Or **175** infants were found in places NOT approved for infant sleep.

Number of infants found in each location:
140 Adult bed, **18** Couch/futon,
4 Inclined product, **3** Carseat, **10** Other

Mechanisms of Suffocation (56)

1 in 4 infants died from accidental suffocation.



2 (soft bedding and overlay)

5 (soft bedding and wedging)

2 infants suffocated from other mechanisms

Temporary Stays (34)

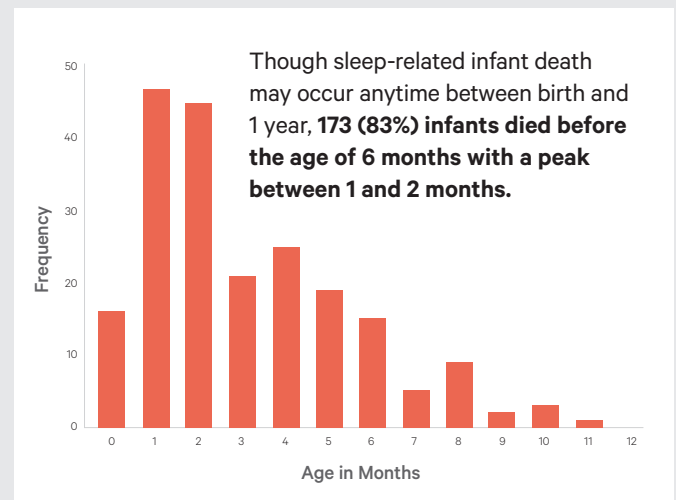
1 in 6 infants died while temporarily away from their usual home.

- These infants were older than infants who died in their usual home. (peak age 4-months-old)
- They were less likely to be under their mother's care.
- They were less likely to have a crib available at the time of their death.



Protect your baby with a safe sleep plan at home and away.

Infant Age of Death



The Sleep Environment

Safe Sleep to Prevent Suffocation

Placing infants on their backs to sleep has been the cornerstone of preventing these deaths since 1994. Greater understanding of other hazards in an infant's sleep environment has emerged over the past two decades — including sleeping with another person, sleeping with soft bedding and sleeping on a sleep surface that is not a safety-approved crib, bassinet, portable crib or play yard. All of these situations raise the risk of sleep-related infant death.

An infant sleeping safely is defined as:

- On their back
- In their crib or bassinet
- With nothing in the crib or bassinet



Learn more at rush.edu/suid.

RUSH



The CDC's Division of Reproductive Health, Department of Health and Human Services provided financial support for the Cook County SUID Case Registry. The contents are those of the authors. They may not reflect the policies of the Department of Health and Human Services or the U.S. government.