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Attachment

Women & Infants Center Shares Tips on Safe Sleep

(BREESE, IL) – October is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month, and the Women and Infant's Center at HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Breese wants to remind parents and caregivers of safe sleep habits that reduce the risk of SIDS.

Unsafe sleep is a leading cause of death for children one year old and younger. In 2018, 143 infants in Illinois under the age of 1 died because of being put to sleep unsafely, including 25 in the southern Illinois region, which consists of 14 counties.

“We educate all of our parents on safe sleep habits,” said Debbie Martin, APRN, NNP-BC, a neonatal nurse practitioner with HSHS Medical Group's Nursery Program at St. Joseph's Women and Infants Center. “Babies should be laid down to sleep on their backs until they are old enough to roll over and have enough neck strength to turn their head from side-to-side. Also, babies should sleep alone in a crib with a firm mattress free of blankets, bumpers, stuffed animals or any other crib items.”

In addition to educating parents, St. Joseph's Women and Infants Center provides all newborn babies with a sleep sack to take home for safe sleeping.

“A sleep sack is a wearable blanket that keeps baby warm and safe while sleeping because it cannot cover the face like a loose blanket possibly could,” explained Debbie.

Of the 143 infant deaths in 2018, 114 were found in locations other than a crib, bassinet or pack and play; 102 were found in positions other than on their back; and 97 were co-sleeping with another individual at the time of death.

“Everyone loves to snuggle with a baby, but we ask that you consider the safe sleep guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics,” said Debbie. “It is discouraged to share a bed or sofa with a baby.”

For more information on safe sleep habits, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics web site at aap.org.

HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Breese is part of the Southern Illinois Division of Hospital Sisters Health System, which includes HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital in O'Fallon, HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital in Effingham, HSHS Holy Family Hospital in Greenville and HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital in Highland.

Photo Caption: Debbie Martin, neonatal nurse practitioner with HSHS Medical Group's Nursery Program at St. Joseph's Women and Infants Center, holds a baby wearing the sleep sack provided by the hospital. Sleep sacks are recommended instead of loose blankets to keep baby safe and warm while sleeping.

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About Hospital Sisters Health System

Hospital Sisters Health System's (HSHS) mission is to reveal and embody Christ's healing love for all people through our high quality, Franciscan health care ministry. HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care to our patients and is dedicated to serving all people, especially the most vulnerable, at each of our 15 Local Systems and physician practices in Illinois (Belleville, Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Greenville, Highland, Litchfield, Shelbyville, and Springfield) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Oconto Falls, Sheboygan, and two in Green Bay). HSHS is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, and [Hospital Sisters of St. Francis](#) is the founding institute. For more information about HSHS, visit www.hshs.org. For more information about Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, visit www.hospitalsisters.org.