

Sleeping on tummy reduces kids SIDS risk:

Washington, Dec 7 : Washington University researchers have recommended that parents should not discourage their babies from sleeping on their tummies.

According to their research, sleeping on the tummy reduces the chances of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

"The first few times babies who usually sleep on their backs or sides shift to the prone (lying face down) position, they have a 19-fold increased risk of sudden death," claimed Dr. Bradley T. Thach, a paediatrician at St.Louis Children's Hospital in Washington State.

The research suggests that babies learn through experience which head movements decrease the discomfort associated with breathing high carbon dioxide levels.

The researchers arrived at their conclusions after examining 38 healthy kids, aged between three and 37 weeks.

It was discovered that 50 percent of the babies examined preferred to sleep with their face down, while the remainder slept in other positions. Thereafter, the researchers changed the surface of the bed and created conditions allowing babies to inhale the same air which they had exhaled, thus increasing the carbon dioxide intake. As a result, the babies woke up within four to five minutes and looked for fresh air in different directions, this increased their intake of oxygen-rich air. "Many parents think that if a baby can lift its head, he or she is okay to sleep prone, but that is a false assurance. Parents and other caregivers should never place an infant in the prone position until he or she shows the ability to spontaneously turn all the way over. Back-sleeping should continue to be strongly encouraged to protect against SIDS," the researchers said.