

WELCOMING NEW BABY



Nancy Forsyth, MSN, RN, NNP-BC, shows new parents Ada Trixia Amaranto and Cory Pierce how to put baby boy Chance Pierce to sleep on his back in a swaddle blanket.

Women's Health Nurtures Moms and Babies

At Beebe Healthcare, the Women's Health Pavilion team works tirelessly to provide successful labor and deliveries that lead to happy and healthy newborns—and the effort does not end there.

Beebe also strives to provide education that will keep the babies healthy when they go home.

THE SAFE SLEEP INITIATIVE SAVES LIVES

"In the United States, the number of infant deaths is unacceptably high," says Nancy

Forsyth, MSN, RN, NNP-BC, neonatal nurse practitioner at Beebe Healthcare in Lewes. "About half of those deaths have no obvious cause."

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or SIDS, is the sudden death of an infant up to one year of age in which no cause of death can be determined after review of clinical history, autopsy, and death scene investigation. Research suggests that subtle neurological or brainstem differences may make some babies more vulnerable. Although SIDS may occur any time in the first year of life, the risk for SIDS peaks at between two to four months of age.

Forsyth, who helps educate all team

members and new parents on the importance of safe sleep, says that while cases of SIDS are decreasing, cases of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death, or SUID, are increasing. SUID includes suffocation and deaths that could have been prevented.

This is where the Safe Sleep Initiative comes in. It is an educational initiative that

ADDITIONAL RISK FACTORS FOR SIDS INCLUDE:

- Premature birth
- Drug exposure
- Viral illness
- Neurological issue

SAFE SLEEP MEANS:

- Baby is put on his back to sleep every time, even for short naps.
- Baby sleeps in a crib or bassinet.
- The crib or bassinet has a firm crib mattress and fitted sheet.
- Nothing is in the bed but the baby: no blankets, pillows, stuffed animals, or crib bumpers.
- Baby sleeps in a one-piece sleeper or sleep sack.
- Car seats, infant seats, and swings should not be used for sleeping.
- Avoid baby's exposure to secondhand smoke.

gives nurses and Women's Health team members the opportunity to discuss with new parents the safest ways for babies to sleep. One of the most important points is that babies should sleep in their own cribs rather than with mom or other family members.

In 2012, for example, 19 of the 24 SUID deaths in Delaware were infants that were not sleeping in a separate crib or bassinet. Delaware is among the top five states for infant deaths. Forsyth, however, emphasizes that this situation could improve through education and better-informed parents.

"Bed sharing is very prevalent in some cultures, so we need to make sure we are telling new parents that each baby should have his or her own space," she says. "There are programs available, such as Cribs for Kids, to help low-income families get a crib."

Breastfeeding also has a protective effect and may decrease the likelihood of SIDS, Forsyth says.

BEEBE FIRST IN STATE TO RECEIVE BABY-FRIENDLY™ DESIGNATION

More than 85 percent of new mothers that give birth at Beebe choose to breastfeed. Across the nation, hospital practices were interfering with the mother's best chances to breastfeed, but Beebe Lactation Consultant Nancy Hastings, RN, IBCLC, and Beebe's Women's Health Pavilion team members have worked tirelessly to make changes so that all new moms can be successful at nursing their children.

It took more than five years for Beebe Healthcare to receive the Baby-Friendly™ designation, Hastings says.

Beebe Healthcare is the first organization in Delaware to earn this international designation, launched as part of the Baby-Friendly

Hospital Initiative (BFHI) in 1991 by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). It recognizes birthing centers that successfully implement the "Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding" and the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes. BFHI encourages practices that protect, promote, and support breast-feeding. The initiative has been implemented in more than 152 countries.

While the focus of Baby-Friendly is on breastfeeding, it also supports the importance of how a mother and infant bond with each other following birth, regardless of feeding method. Immediately after birth, the labor-and-delivery nurse gives the baby to the mother to hold on her bare chest, skin-to-skin, to assist in stabilizing the baby's temperature and blood sugar and to begin the bonding process. Mothers that give birth by cesarean section at Beebe can practice this skin-to-skin experience once they are in the recovery room.

"Some may worry that the Safe Sleep Initiative, which promotes babies sleeping separately from mothers, goes against breastfeeding, but it really doesn't," Hastings says. "The two initiatives really do work hand-in-hand; it's all about education." ■



BABY-FRIENDLY™

10 STEPS HOSPITALS MUST MEET

- STEP 1:** Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all healthcare staff.
- STEP 2:** Train all healthcare staff in the skills necessary to implement this policy.
- STEP 3:** Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
- STEP 4:** Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
- STEP 5:** Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation even if they are separated from their infants.
- STEP 6:** Give infants no food or drink other than breast milk unless medically indicated.
- STEP 7:** Practice rooming-in to allow mothers and infants to remain together twenty-four hours a day.
- STEP 8:** Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
- STEP 9:** Give no pacifiers or artificial nipples to breastfeeding infants.
- STEP 10:** Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or birth center.

Left to right: Nancy Hastings, RN, IBCLC; Denice Powell, RN, Nurse Manager of the Women's Health Pavilion; and unit nurse Joanie Gay, RN.