

**From SIDS Network of Kansas, <http://www.sidsks.org>**

### **Another Baby**

If you are expecting a baby, you will probably be a little nervous and excited as well as afraid. It is hard to be patient. It's also unfair to have to wait and go through this all again. The pregnancy can seem to last forever, and it may be hard to believe it won't happen again. Building a good support system can really help. Talk with your doctor or another health professional; you can also contact the SIDS Alliance. Speaking with other SIDS parents who have had subsequent children may help. Search within your group of relatives and friends for people who will listen to your fears, not give you lots of unsolicited advice. Reviewing the facts about SIDS and reducing the risks of SIDS may also be reassuring.

For lack of a better term, your next child has been called the "subsequent child." This new child is indeed a very special one to you and to everyone else. The birth of a subsequent child can be an overwhelming emotional experience. When you see and hold your new baby for the first time, you may find that difficult memories come flooding back and intermingle with the pleasure you are feeling. The moment can be a mixture of great joy and intense pain.

Will you spend twenty-four hours a day by the crib? The answer is no. Even if you try, eventually you will get tired, which isn't good for you or your baby. This is when you learn to trust — in living, in yourself and your values. You will probably check on your sleeping baby more frequently than you did your other children. Parents of subsequent children are the first to admit that in the past they used to check their babies to see if they were covered, whereas now they check breaths and heartbeats. Many babies are quiet sleepers; a gentle hand on the tummy can reassure you. Babies do pause in their breathing periodically and sometimes pant for a breath or two. If you remember this, you will spare yourself some moments of uneasiness.

The most uncomfortable period will be the point when your subsequent child nears the age of the child who died. It is one of those milestones that has to be reached and passed. Once it is, most parents report their moments of uneasiness start to decrease. Most of all, be assured you are not the only person to experience discomfort or panic. Nearly everyone does. You can only do your best in finding ways to handle it. If you find you are feeling uneasy most of the time, be sure to consult your doctor, other health professional or the SIDS Alliance for some additional help.

The birth of your newborn represents hope and a promise of the continuity of life. Joy and sorrow are memories in your life that enable you to know the importance of hope. Many parents have weathered the crisis, panic, and great joy of their subsequent child's infancy. They acknowledge, while it was not always easy and they had to work at handling their emotions, their effort was rewarded by one of the most wonderful periods in their lives.

Also, see this 48-page booklet:

<http://www.sidsandkids.org/pdf/anotherbaby.pdf>