



SIDS

The ABC news program *20/20* aired a story claiming that the hepatitis B vaccine caused SIDS. The story included a picture of a 1-month-old girl who died of SIDS only 16 hours after receiving the second dose of hepatitis B vaccine.

At the time of introduction of the hepatitis B vaccine for routine use in all infants, about 5,000 children died every year from SIDS. Within 10 years of the introduction of the hepatitis B vaccine the use of the vaccine increased to about 90 percent of all infants and the incidence of SIDS in that group decreased dramatically to about 1,600 cases each year. The cause of the decrease in SIDS cases was the introduction of the "Back to Sleep" program by the AAP.

However, given that immunizations are given to about 90 percent of children less than 1 year of age, and that about 1,600 cases of SIDS occur every year, it would be expected, statistically, that every year about 50 cases of SIDS will occur within 24 hours of receipt of a vaccine. However, because the incidence of SIDS is the same in children who do or do not receive vaccines, we know that SIDS is not caused by vaccines.