



## Travis County Medical Examiner

Feb. 19, 2014

### Infant deaths increase in Travis County in the past six weeks

The Travis County Medical Examiner's Office reports that five infant deaths in the past six weeks have occurred in Travis County in situations where babies were sharing the same sleep surface with one or more adults.

"We're very concerned about the recent increase in infant deaths in unsafe sleep environments," said Travis County Medical Examiner Dr. David Dolinak. "We want to remind the public that no one should fall asleep while sharing the same sleep surface as babies."

Unsafe sleep environments include: sharing the same sleep surface (such as an adult bed, a couch, chair or floor); the use of any extraneous bedding materials in the infant's sleep environment (such as pillows, blankets, comforters and bumper pads), and the addition to the infant's sleep environment of items such as stuffed animals, soft objects, or any surface that may cause suffocation.

The public should follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendations to increase safety for sleeping babies. Safe sleep is as easy as A-B-C. Babies should sleep:

- **Alone:** Bed-sharing, which is sleeping with a baby, is dangerous. Babies should sleep alone, not with an adult, child or animal. Room sharing with a baby is a better way to sleep near your little one.
- **On their Back:** Not on their side or tummy. Place babies on their back for every sleep time, including naps and at night.
- **In a safety-approved Crib:** Put babies on a firm surface, preferably a safety-approved crib with a firm crib mattress covered by a fitted sheet. Do not use bedding material, such as bumper pads, pillows, blankets or clutter, such as soft toys or stuffed animals. (Safety approved bassinets, play yards and portable cribs are acceptable).

For more information contact, Leanne Courtney, Travis County Medical Examiner's Office Forensic Nurse, at 512-854-4425. For more information about this and other safe living topics, go to: [www.TravisCountyTX.gov/Medical\\_Examiner](http://www.TravisCountyTX.gov/Medical_Examiner).

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