Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: 
Probing the Science and Family Impact

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Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is the most common cause of death in infants between ages 1-month and 1-year, yet its cause remains unknown. The usual story is that an apparently healthy infant is put down to sleep, and the parent comes back some time later to find that the infant has died suddenly and unexpectedly. By law, all such infants undergo a death scene investigation and autopsy, yet the cause of the death remains unexplained. What is the cause of this medical mystery? In this micro-seminar, we will explore where medical research is taking us to understand how these deaths occur. Public health interventions, like having babies sleep on their backs, have dramatically decreased the number of babies dying from SIDS. We will investigate the role of public health education to prevent medical illness. Surviving family members are forever changed after a SIDS death. We will learn the impact on the family first hand from a SIDS parent.