

A Retrospective Study of Parent's First-Hand Experience with Premonitions and Other Anomalous Aspects of SIDS Phenomenon

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Problem

Though the incidence of SIDS and SUID has decreased through 'Safe to Sleep' education and a reclassification of sudden infant deaths, the etiologies of SIDS have not been identified prior to their deaths.

Premonitions of SIDS parents and mothers of stillborn infants have been described in the literature.

Goal

To determine if premonitions and a set of anomalous markers are more common in a group of SIDS parents compared with Non-SIDS parent control group.

Intervention Design

A group of 517 SIDS parents was contacted who had participated in a SIDS study with approval by principal investigator (Torres, personal communication, August 31, 2017).

An electronic survey of 58 questions (yes/no, multiple choice, open field) were sent to these 517 SIDS parents. There were 100 responses in the SIDS parent group.

A non-SIDS parent control group was identified via a SurveyMonkey platform of US parents of children up to 18 years of age. A total of 106 responses were used as the control group.

Statistical comparisons were carried out using 2 proportion Z-tests, Fisher's exact tests. The work was done by Hong Tran, Ph.D., Bioinformatics, MsC. Statistics, Virginia Tech. A p value of < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results

Study Categories / Results

Category	Control Group (N = 106)	SIDS Parents (N = 100)	P.value	Statistical test
Premonitions of child's death	1.88%	48.98%	1.455e-16	Fisher's Exact Test
Timing of Premonition < 1 Week	5.00%	22.20%	0.0006	2 proportion z-test
Timing of Premonition < 1 Day	5.00%	37.70%	2.141e-08	2 proportion z-test
Unusual Gaze/Tendency to Stare	13.21%	27.84%	0.0149	2 proportion z-test
Delivery Issues	23.58%	53.13%	2.389e-05	2 proportion z-test
Unusual Behaviors/ Old Soul	1.88%	12.00%	0.0046	2 proportion z-test
Advanced	27.36%	28.57%	0.969	2 proportion z-test
Anomalous Electrical or Mechanical Events	8.49%	12.00%	0.547	2 proportion z-test
Total Comparison	10.8%	30.30%	1.346e-22	2 proportion z-test

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Study authors Eric Sage and Nancy Maruyama each lost a son to SIDS and each also had a premonition of their sons' deaths.

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Lessons Learned

1. Premonitions were statistically significantly more common in SIDS parents compared with Non-SIDS parents in this pilot study.
2. The observations of unusual gaze/tendency to stare and unusual behaviors/"old soul" were also statistically significantly more frequent in SIDS-parent compared with Non-SIDS parents in this study.
3. If confirmed with larger studies, this collection of experiences/observations has the potential to be an "early warning system" could provide the medical and scientific opportunity to study and identify etiologies of SIDS and SUID and potentially further decrease the incidence of SIDS and SUID in these infants.

References

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