

Shaken Baby Syndrome

Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) is the result of a traumatic brain injury. SBS happens when a baby is:

- Shaken
- Dropped
- Thrown
- Caused head injury in some other way

SBS is the leading cause of child abuse deaths in the United States. SBS is most commonly found in babies from 3 to 8 months of age. Babies up to 4 months of age are at the greatest risk for being shaken. SBS can occur in children up to five years of age.

A baby's neck muscles cannot manage shaking or impact to the head. This can cause a baby's brain to swell, bruise and bleed. The result is SBS.

Parents or caregivers may shake or strike a baby because they are frustrated or exhausted. They may not know how to deal with a crying baby. They may not understand child development or how to comfort a baby. They may have learned the behavior from someone else.

SBS can affect children in many ways. Babies with SBS may be irritable or not able to eat much. Some may not stop crying. SBS can also cause learning delays, blindness, hearing problems or death.

Other SBS symptoms may include:

- Sleep pattern changes
- Difficulty in waking up
- Seizures
- Motor skill issues
- Muscle spasms
- Cerebral Palsy

Parents or caregivers who feel at a loss for ways to cope with an upset baby can call a friend or relative to ask for help or just to talk.

Parents or caregivers may also call the:

- Crying Baby Hotline at 1-866-243-2229
- The Brain Injury Helpline at 1-866-412-4755

To talk to someone about domestic abuse, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)

1-800-787-3224 (TTY for the Deaf)

Or visit: www.ndvh.org