



Children whose mothers are diagnosed with an alcohol disorder in pregnancy, or within a year after giving birth, are three times more likely to die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), compared with infants whose mothers do not have an alcohol disorder, a new study finds.

Australian researchers found drinking was associated with about one of every six SIDS deaths, HealthDay reports.

About 3 percent of non-SIDS deaths were also linked with alcohol abuse by mothers. The findings are published in the journal *Pediatrics*. The researchers analyzed almost 78,000 live births from 1983 to 2005, and found almost 22,000 of the mothers had an alcohol diagnosis. More than 300 children died from SIDS, and almost 600 died of other causes.

They concluded maternal alcohol use disorder is a significant risk factor for SIDS, as well as non-SIDS infant deaths. The researchers could not explain the exact link between alcohol abuse and SIDS, but suggested alcohol has a detrimental effect on the fetal brainstem during pregnancy.

Each year in the United States, more than 4,500 infants die suddenly of no immediate, obvious cause, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Half of these deaths are due to SIDS.

Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE) or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is an umbrella term used to describe the range of effects that can occur in an individual exposed to alcohol. [Click here](#) to read more.