

## Background

The occurrence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and early childhood cavities are substantially reduced when parents follow the physician's advice about sleep position and night-time feeding given at routine well-child visits. In addition, both conditions disproportionately affect African American children.

Research has demonstrated that the quality of the patient-physician relationship is a powerful predictor of following physician advice (adherence) and continuity of care for adult patients and their own physicians. African American patients have relationships with their physicians that are lower in quality than non-Hispanic White patients. Very little is known as to how the quality of the parent-pediatrician relationship affects parental adherence and continuity for children's health care and the effect of racial differences between parent and pediatrician.

## Research Questions

This study will examine the following questions:

1. What are the modifiable factors affecting the quality of the parent-pediatrician relationship that predict adherence to the supine sleep and night feeding recommendations given to parents by physicians?
2. What are the modifiable factors affecting the quality of the parent-pediatrician relationship predicting continuity of care with the same physician group over the first year of life?
3. What are the similarities and differences in these factors between African American and non-Hispanic White parents?
4. Can the parent-physician relationship be enhanced with a simple, physician-focused intervention?

## Methods

We are enrolling parents of newborns who are new families to the pediatrician's practice. Through several structured phone interviews, spaced throughout the first year of the child's life, we will measure parental perceptions of the care received at the practice and the quality of their relationship with their child's physician as well as their adherence to the supine sleep and night feeding recommendations.

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