

## **One-fifth of Americans have been touched by SIDS**

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One in every five American adults knows a family that lost a child to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. People who have children of their own are more than twice as likely to personally know a victim of SIDS than are people who've never been parents, according to a nationwide survey of 1,010 adults conducted by Scripps Howard News Service and Ohio University.

The poll found that SIDS, which has been diagnosed in about 2,200 infant deaths annually in recent years, has touched about 20 percent of the adult population. About 25 percent of married people with children personally know a SIDS victim compared to only 9 percent of single people who never had children.

More than a third of people with large families of three or more children report knowing a SIDS victim personally. Women are slightly more likely than men to know of a family struck by the syndrome.

But in all other respects, SIDS is about equally known among people of different races, levels of education and income.

People in the poll gave mixed answers when asked if they thought the rate of SIDS is increasing or decreasing. Although sudden and unexpected infant death has dropped slightly in the United States during the last 20 years, coroners and medical examiners have reduced the rate they diagnose SIDS by more than 60 percent.

The poll found that 31 percent believe SIDS is as common as it ever was, 28 percent said it's becoming less common, 12 percent said they think it has become more common and 29 percent were undecided.

Again, people who know SIDS victims and who have children themselves are more likely to realize that SIDS diagnoses are becoming less common.

The survey was conducted by telephone May 6-27 among 1,010 adult residents of the United States who were selected at random. The survey was conducted by the Scripps Survey Research Center at Ohio University under a grant from the Scripps Howard Foundation.

The survey has a margin of error of about 3 percent.