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## Bedsharing and breastfeeding duration among US mothers

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**BACKGROUND:** Bedsharing between mothers and infants is controversial. Some professional associations recommend against bedsharing to reduce the risk of SIDS and suffocation deaths, while other breastfeeding advocates support bedsharing to facilitate breastfeeding. Prior cross-sectional studies have shown an association between bedsharing and breastfeeding duration.

**METHODS:** We used survival analysis to examine associations between bedsharing and breastfeeding duration using longitudinal data from Infant Feeding Practice Study II (IFPS II). The IFPS II (2005-2007) asked about bedsharing at infant ages 2 weeks and months 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, and 12. This analysis includes 2067 mothers who answered at least one question regarding bedsharing and were breastfeeding at infant age 2 weeks. Cox proportional hazard models were fitted, treating cumulative bedsharing duration as a time-dependent covariate, adjusting for 11 confounders. **RESULTS:** Among mothers who started bedsharing at the same infant age, longer duration of bedsharing was associated with longer duration of any breastfeeding and of 100% of milk feeds as breast milk to 12 months. It was not associated with duration of exclusive breastfeeding within the first 6 months. Among infants with the same cumulative bedsharing duration, starting bedsharing at a later age was associated with longer duration of any breastfeeding, but not the other breastfeeding measures. **CONCLUSIONS:** This study, in which bedsharing behavior was measured before breastfeeding cessation, provides strong evidence that

breastfeeding duration is related to bedsharing duration. However, because of bedsharing risks, it is essential to find ways to encourage safe infant sleeping while also maintaining breastfeeding.

**Learning Areas:**

Implementation of health education strategies, interventions and programs

Planning of health education strategies, interventions, and programs

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Describe the relation between maternal and infant bedsharing and various measures of breastfeeding duration. 2. Explain the importance of two aspects of bedsharing, age of infant when bedsharing began and duration of bedsharing.

**Keywords:** Breastfeeding, SIDS

**Presenting author's disclosure statement:**

**Qualified on the content I am responsible for because:** I am the project director for the Infant Feeding Practices Study II, and I have been a researcher in the area of infant feeding and health at the Food and Drug Administration for more than 20 years.

**Any relevant financial relationships?** No

I agree to comply with the American Public Health Association Conflict of Interest and Commercial Support Guidelines, and to disclose to the participants any off-label or experimental uses of a commercial product or service discussed in my presentation.

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