Abstract

Background/Significance: Sudden unexpected postnatal collapse (SUPC) of healthy newborns in the first two days of life is increasing and some newborns are dying during skin-to-skin contact (SSC) and breastfeeding because of unsafe positioning. A literature review suggested that a need existed for professional nursing education about safe positioning of newborns to reduce risk of SUPC.

Problem: Little was known about nurses' knowledge about SUPC and Safe Newborn Positioning because only three studies could be found regarding nurses' knowledge of SUPC and Safe Newborn Positioning.

Purpose: The purposes of the descriptive evaluative study were to determine clinical obstetric nurses' knowledge about SUPC and about Safe Newborn Positioning to prevent SUPC.

Method: A descriptive evaluative study was conducted with 36 complete data sets from 50 clinical obstetric nurses. Knowledge of SUPC and of Safe Newborn Positioning was determined using the SUPC and Safe Positioning Assessment Tool (SSPAT), a 20-item questionnaire. Knowledge scores were reported as mean, standard deviation, and percentage of correct answers.

Results: Nurses answered only 61.0% of SUPC questions correctly and only 72.0% of Safe Newborn Positioning questions correctly. Difference between SUPC and Safe Newborn Positioning scores was statistically significant. Masters prepared and Inpatient OB certified nurses scored 60.0% correct answers on SUPC and 72.4% correct answers on Safe Newborn Positioning.

Conclusion: Nurses had less than optimal knowledge of SUPC and Safe Newborn Positioning and knew the most about Safe Newborn Positioning. A need for continuing education about SUPC and Safe Newborn Positioning exists.