

2 Ways Babies Sleep

Babies go through periods of light and deep sleep. Both types of sleep are important for your baby's health.

LIGHT SLEEP

Babies need light sleep for their brains to grow and develop.



During Light Sleep Babies:

- Move around and make noises
- Have eye twitches or open and close their eyes quickly
- Have fast and slow breathing
- Dream
- Wake up easily

DEEP SLEEP

Babies need deep sleep for their brains to rest.



During Deep Sleep Babies:

- Don't move very much
- Have relaxed and floppy arms and legs
- Have regular steady breathing
- Make sucking movements
- Don't wake up easily

If your baby wakes up easily when you lay him down, wait for signs of deep sleep first. Then lay him down.

Tips for Sleepy Parents

For a few months, most of your sleep will be in short 2-3 hour stretches. These tips will NOT make your baby sleep through the night, but they may help YOU get a few more minutes of sleep.

Keep baby close at night

Doctors recommend you put your baby's crib in the same room for the first few months. When your baby wakes up and needs something, you won't have far to go.

Keep the lights low

Keeping lights low while you feed, burp or change your baby's diaper during the night will help you get back to sleep more quickly. You do NOT want low lighting if you are doing something that requires your full attention, such as giving medicine.

Sleep when your baby sleeps

While it may seem impossible, try to sleep when your baby sleeps. Even 90 minutes of sleep can help you feel more rested.

Ask for help

Taking care of your little one can be hard work. Ask family and friends for help at home.

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Developed by the Douglas/Sarpy County WIC staff in collaboration with the Nebraska WIC Program.
This information has been adapted from the California WIC Program California Department of Health and the UC Davis Human Lactation Center



Healthy Sleep BABY

Night time waking can be hard for new parents

Knowing what to expect will help you feel more relaxed and confident.





Baby Sleep Patterns

Some babies need more sleep than others. As your baby gets older, his sleep will change and become more predictable. This is what you can expect:

Newborn to 6 Weeks

During the first 6 weeks, your baby's sleep will be unpredictable. He is still getting used to the new world around him.

Newborn babies sleep for only a few hours at a time and they will wake up many times throughout the day and night. This is normal and healthy for them.

6 to 8 Weeks

Your baby may sleep more at night because he is awake more during the day. Waking up at night is still normal and healthy.

About 3 Months

At night, your baby will sleep for longer periods of time, and wake up less often.

About 6 Months

Your baby may sleep up to 10 hours at a time.

Babies may have times when they wake up more often due to growth spurts, sickness, or changes in routine.



Your newborn baby will wake up frequently. Her stomach is so small that she needs to eat often.

Babies are supposed to wake up at night. Waking up at night is important to keep your baby healthy. Babies need to wake up to be fed, to be comfortable and to be safe. Doctors recommend that babies should be put on their backs to sleep.

SAMPLE

Tips for Coping with Your Crying Baby

It may take a while for your baby to calm down when she is crying. This can be very frustrating for parents.

- Ask a friend or family member to give you a break by helping with your baby.
- If you start to feel angry or overwhelmed, lay your baby down in a safe place for a few minutes and take a break.
- Remember, babies cry less and less as they get older.
- Contact WIC or your doctor if you think your baby is crying too much.



Although it is stressful to hear a baby cry, crying is normal for all babies. It is one way they communicate with you.



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Crying

Babies cry for many reasons, not just because they are hungry.

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Douglas/Sagey County

By crying,
your baby
may be telling you...



I need something to be different
I would like some quiet time
I need my diaper changed
I need to be close to you
I am too hot or too cold
I need to be burped
I might be sick
I am hungry
I am afraid
I am tired

3 Steps To Calm Your Crying Baby

Sample

Babies use crying as a way to communicate that they need your help. When your baby cries:

1. Try to Figure Out the Reason for Crying

For example, she may be:

- In need of a diaper change
- Overwhelmed
- Hungry
- Too hot or too cold
- Uncomfortable
- Tired

There may be times when you've checked everything and your baby still cries.

When this happens:

2. Hold Your Baby Close to You

As your baby gets older, she will get better at letting you know what she needs. As you get better at understanding and responding to what your baby needs, she will cry less.



3. Repeat the Same Action Over and Over

You might try one of the following:

- Speaking softly or singing
- Gently rocking, swaying or bouncing your baby
- Gently massaging her back, arms, and legs

Be patient. Calming your baby takes time. If your baby continues to cry or becomes more upset, try one of the other suggestions listed above.

As you get to know your baby, you will begin to recognize what he or she is trying to tell you. Remember, learning how your baby communicates with you takes time. As babies get older, they will cry less and be easier to understand.

Normal Newborn Behavior

Day 1:

- Baby is alert for two hours after delivery. This is a perfect time for skin-to-skin contact and to begin feeding.
- Afterwards, the baby sleeps for a longer period of time to rest and recover from birth.
- Newborn babies struggle to stay awake the first day, even when they are trying to eat.
- Parents may think "what a good, quiet, sleeping baby" on the first day.
- Mom's breasts will still feel soft during the first hours, just as they were during her pregnancy.



Day 2-3:

- The baby will cry more and it may seem constant. Possible reasons for this crying include: missed hunger cues, their new surroundings, or sensitivity to what is going on inside their bodies.
- Baby is more alert and wants to feed very frequently.
- There will be little sleep for mom and baby – not at all like day one. This is normal.
- Your breast may feel fuller, heavier, or begin to leak beginning on days three and four due to mature milk developing.



Tips for caregivers dealing with normal newborn behavior on days 1-3:

- **Expect increased crying.**
 - Keep baby close.
 - Watch for early feeding cues.
 - Practice skin-to-skin contact.
 - Limit visitors.
- **Prepare for less sleep.**
 - Rest as much as you can.
 - Sleep when baby sleeps.
- **Be ready for baby to eat often.**
 - Normal because of baby's small stomach size.
 - Watch for feeding cues by practicing skin-to-skin.
 - Feeding frequently = more breastmilk.

Knowing what to expect on days 1-3 will help you to feel more confident in caring for your newborn.



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What should I do if my baby needs something to be different?

When your baby gives you cues that she is overwhelmed, give her a break from the world around her:

- Turn her away or stop the activity and hold her close to your body.
- Change the environment. People or noises can be very tiring for babies. Move her away from the noise and wait until she is ready to interact again.
- Lay her down for a nap if she is tired. Quiet time is good for both of you!
- Teach siblings about baby cues. Show them how baby lets them know when she needs a break.
- Newborn babies may also be sensitive to what's going on inside their bodies.
- Some babies may be fussy right after feeding.
- Be patient, they may need to burp, pass gas or poop.

I Want to Be Near You



As your newborn baby gets older, it will be easier to tell when he is ready to interact, learn or play.

He might:

- Have a relaxed face and body
- Follow your voice and face
- Reach toward you
- Stare at your face
- Raise his head



I Need Something to Be Different

Learning is hard work for babies and they can get tired quickly. Your baby will show you signs that he needs something to be different.

He might:

- Look away, turn away, or arch his back
- Frown or have a glazed look in his eyes
- Stiffen his hands, arms or legs
- Yawn or fall asleep

Responding to cues quickly, before your baby starts to fuss, may help your baby cry less.



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