

Calming a Crying Baby

Healthy babies cry



Some cry a little and some cry a lot. Here are some things for you to know.

Why do babies cry?

Crying is your baby's first way of communicating and is a normal sign that your baby may need to be fed, to sleep, to be held, or have a diaper change.

Sometimes they may feel uncomfortable, there may be too much noise or excitement, or they are sick. Other times it seems they cry for no reason and no matter what you do to comfort them, they cannot be soothed. ***No matter how much your baby cries, they do not do it on purpose or to upset you.***

When are babies most likely to cry?

Babies usually have fussy periods in the late afternoon or evening. In the first three months of life, around 25% of babies cry for more than three and a half hours each day. At around three months old, babies start to cry less. They begin to babble and to move more easily, and start to be able to express themselves in ways other than crying.



Never Shake or Hit a Baby

The effects can be very serious and can include lifelong injury or even death.

What can I do?

Go to your baby and pick them up. Picking up a baby does not spoil them, it lets them know they can trust you. Offer the baby your breast, hold them skin-to-skin, check their diaper and try to burp them. If they are too hot, try lighter clothing, or if they are too cold, add a layer. Some babies like a warm bath. Others like to move, so you can try gentle rocking, taking them for a walk or a drive. Talking or singing to them in a soft voice, rubbing their back, using infant massage, or white noise (constant low volume background noise) may settle a crying baby. Other babies like quiet time, so take them away from any noise. If the crying is constant, louder than usual, or the baby has a fever or is vomiting, or you have concerns that something is wrong, go to the hospital or health clinic.



When the crying won't stop.

Sometimes it seems that nothing you try will settle your baby and the crying continues. It is okay to ask for help. Call a friend or relative you can trust. It is important to get away from the baby if you think you might lose control. It is just as important to be sure that the baby will be safe while you are gone.

Never shake or hit a baby!

No matter how upset you get, never shake or hit your baby. This can damage your baby's brain. Never touch your baby in anger. If you feel like you are losing control, lay your baby in a safe place and leave the room, take a 10 - 15 minute break to give yourself a chance to calm down.

Babies cry. It's not your fault.

It is no surprise that babies cry. But what may be a surprise is how frustrating it can be to care for a fussy baby. There are times—for every mom, dad and caregiver—when a crying baby can be completely overwhelming, ***but no matter how bad it gets or how tired and frustrated you feel, shaking the baby, putting the baby down roughly, or throwing the baby is never the answer.***

Take care of yourself.

If people offer help, accept it. Eat healthy and sleep when you can, find some time to exercise and visit with a friend.

For more information or assistance:



Call your Community Health Nurse

Your community health nurse is available for support. They can connect you with local resources in your community.



Call the HealthLine

Call 811 / TTY 1-888-709-3555



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