

Secrets of Baby Behavior



Birth-3 months



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CRYING CUES

The average 6-week-old baby cries for about 2 hours per day.

Crying is one way a baby communicates with you. Although it is stressful to hear a baby cry, crying is normal baby behavior.

- Crying babies will have jerky movements, tense muscles, stretched out arms and fingers, but with these babies, there are no signs of hunger.
- When babies show you these cues, they are telling you that something needs to be different.
- Using the right technique to calm your baby can help reduce crying and lessen stress.
 - Ways to calm your baby include.
 - Holding them close (skin to skin)
 - Repeating the same action over and over , such as speaking softly or singing, gently rocking, swaying, or bouncing.
 - Massaging back, arms, or legs
 - Change of scenery
- Sometimes babies will calm down right away, other times it may take longer.
 - If your baby continues to cry or becomes more upset after several minutes, try something different.

FEEDING CUES FOR A FULL TERM BABY

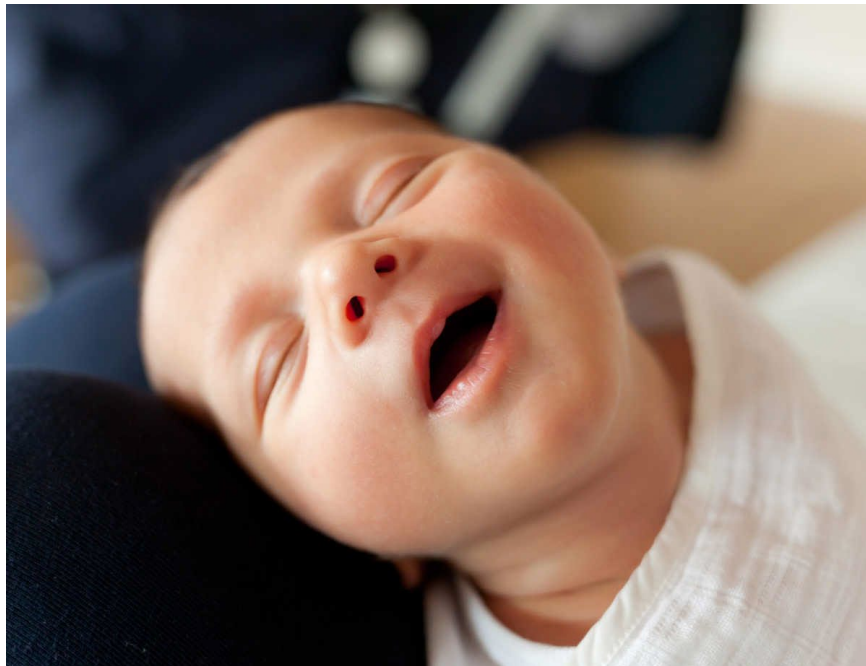
How do I know if my baby is hungry?

- Licking lips, smacking/sucking sounds opening mouth, sticking out tongue out
- Sucking on anything nearby
- Rooting (turning head & opening mouth)
- Fidgeting, squirming, breathing fast, positioning for nursing.
- Fussing
- Frantic, agitated movements
- Crying, turning red (this is a late cue)

Fullness cues

When your baby is full, he/she may do:

- Suck slower or stop sucking
- Relax his/her hands and arms
- Turns away from nipple
- Push away
- Falls asleep



EARLY CUES - "I'm hungry"



- Stirring



- Mouth opening



- Turning head
- Seeking/rooting

MID CUES - "I'm really hungry"



- Stretching



- Increasing physical movement



- Hand to mouth

LATE CUES - "Calm me, then feed me"



- Crying



- Agitated body movements



- Colour turning red

SLEEP CUES



Understanding why and when babies wake up can help tired parents.

Babies and adults sleep very differently.

Babies sleep 13-14 hours per day from 2-12 months old, **but not all at one time**. Babies and adults both wake up at night, but sometimes it is harder for babies to get back to sleep. **Waking is actually very healthy for babies**. When babies sleep, part of the time, they sleep lightly.

Changing Sleep States

Babies can move through states very quickly, making it hard for parents to know why their baby is behaving the way he/she is. Being aware of cues and paying attention to baby's surroundings can help caregivers understand why their babies might be upset or overly sleepy.



Repetitions to sooth:

Whenever a baby is crying, caregivers should be encouraged to try to identify why the baby is crying. Once the baby's needs are met, he/she may still be fussy. Fussy babies will calm down when caregivers remain calm and use soothing sounds and motions over and over again. Remember, it may take a few minutes or more to calm a baby who is upset.

Examples (repeat over and over):

Singing a song

- Holding the baby close and rocking gently back and forth.
- Rubbing baby's back
- Saying the babies name in a calm voice
- Change of scenery

Variety to awaken:

Sometimes babies are very sleepy and may be hard to wake for feeds. Newborns of mothers who had medication during labor may be particularly sleepy. Fortunately, babies brains are made to react to varied stimulation. When a sleepy baby needs to wake up, it is best to use different touches, sounds, and positions to stimulate the baby's brain.

Examples:

- Change the baby's position.
- Remove the baby's cloths and or change his/her diaper.
- Touch the baby gently in several different places (toes, hands, tummy)
- Call the baby by name several times.



Although all healthy babies are different, most move through the states in similar ways. If babies are very sleepy or very upset, it may take sometimes for them to respond. If a baby does not respond at all to the suggestions above (after several minutes), she/ he may need to be referred to a doctor.

There are 2 types of infant sleep: “Active Sleep” and “Quiet Sleep.”

Every time a baby falls asleep, he/she spends time in each type of sleep. The light sleep is called “Active sleep” and the deep sleep is called “Quiet Sleep.”



During Active Sleep

- Babies dream.
- Babies wake up.
- Babies’ brains are stimulated to grow and develop.
- Babies may move around and make noises.

Active sleep causes blood and nutrients to go to your baby’s brain. Babies’ brains need active sleep to grow and develop.

During Quiet Sleep.

- Babies don’t move very much.
- Babies make sucking movements.
- Babies might startle.
- Babies take longer to wake up.

Quiet sleep is deep and is important for the brain to rest.

Waking at night

How many times do most babies wake up at night?

- 0-8 weeks: 3-4 times
- 2 months: 2-3 times
- 4 months: 1-2 times
- 6 months: 0-1 times

If your baby wakes up a lot more than this, talk to your doctor.

Tips and Facts for tired parents.

- Wait 20 minutes before putting baby down after he/she falls asleep.
- Newborns sleep 16 hours a per day.
- By 6-8 weeks, they will sleep more at night.
- Older babies sleep 13-14 hours per day.
- **It is normal for babies to wake, and feed threw out the night they have tiny tummies and require frequent feedings.**