

ALL BABIES CRY ...

A crying baby needs something. Crying is a healthy way for your baby to communicate. Check that your baby's needs have been met. Make sure that he or she is not:

- * hungry (and doesn't have gas)
- * wet (and in need of a change)
- * tired
- * too hot or cold

Some babies cry because of overstimulation. Try to keep your house calm and quiet.

Some babies cry even though their needs have been met. Babies with colic cry more than other babies. They usually cry for several hours in the late afternoon through the evening.

Colic has certain signs. If your baby has colic he or she may also:

- * draw up his or her legs
- * have a swollen belly
- * pass excessive gas

Babies with colic are as normal and healthy as other babies. Colic is not your fault. It's not caused by bad parenting or anything you have done.

Be patient and loving. The good news is that colic will pass. Babies usually outgrow colic after about four months.

Other Handle with Care Tips

Always support your baby's head when holding or carrying him or her. Show others who care for your infant how to properly support a baby's head.

Never leave a baby unattended, especially on changing tables or beds or in the bath.

Be sure to talk to your doctor or nurse if you're worried about your child's crying—or any other health problem.

**For more information call
The Parent Helpline
1-800-CHILDREN
1-800-244-5373**



Prevent Child Abuse New York
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Handle with Care

**What you need to know about crying,
coping and colic.**

Remember, never shake a baby!



Help your Crying Baby

Hold and stroke your baby. Calm, gentle touch often soothes babies. Gently massage your baby's back, stomach and chest.

Calm your baby. Make things calm and quiet. Turn off the TV and lower the lights. Play soft music, hum or run a fan or clothes dryer. Take your baby for a walk. Try a pacifier or your finger for baby to suck on.

Try to warm your baby. Give baby a warm bath or try to wrap baby in a warm towel or blanket.

Watch how you feed your baby. If you bottle feed talk to your pediatrician about trying a different formula. If you breastfeed, ask your pediatrician about avoiding certain foods. Be sure to burp your baby after feeding.

If your baby has colic, avoid some places. Try not to have your baby around loud noises, crowded streets and busy places, especially in the later afternoon and evening.

When should you be worried? If your baby cries a lot or seems to be in pain, contact your pediatrician. If your child cries for three hours or more for more than three days a week, he or she may have colic. Ask your pediatrician for advice.

Help Yourself

Listening to your baby cry can be stressful. Try to be patient and calm.

All parents need a break every now and then. If your baby's cries are getting to be too much, take a break. Ask your partner, friend or other trusted adult to watch your baby for a short time. Take time to relax and cool down.

Try to get some sleep. Ask your partner or someone you trust to take care of your baby while you catch up on some sleep.

Talk about the problem. Talk with other parents, friends or relatives. Find out about parenting classes or support groups. Talk with your pediatrician. He or she can suggest other ways to help.

If you're becoming angry, be safe, not sorry. Never shake or hit your baby. Put your child in a safe place, like his or her crib, and leave the room until you can cool down. **It's better for your baby to cry than for you to risk hurting your baby!**

You can cope with a crying baby. The crying will pass. Always be patient and loving. If you feel your temper rising, remember to put the baby in a safe place and walk away.

Never Shake your Baby

No matter how stressed or angry you feel, never shake or hit your baby. This can cause brain damage, blindness and death.

This is often referred to as Shaken Baby Syndrome or SBS. It's most common in very young infants but can happen to children as old as three or four.

Most of the time, SBS occurs when adults become frustrated and angry with babies and shake them strenuously.

Many people are not aware of how seriously this can hurt a child.

Some "play" activities are hazardous, too:

- * Repeated, vigorous tossing of a small child into the air
- * Jogging while carrying an infant on one's back or shoulders
- * Hard bouncing of a small child on one's knee
- * Swinging a child around by the ankles

Make sure that everyone who has contact with your baby knows about SBS, understands what to do if they're frustrated by crying, and is aware of the dangers of shaking and rough play.