

# Crying

## \* Why do babies cry?

Everyone knows babies cry. Some cry a little, some cry a lot. It's the only way they can tell you what they need.

Just remember that:

- Crying can be stressful but it's normal.
- Crying doesn't always mean your baby is hungry.
- As your baby grows older, he will cry less.
- Relax, it's temporary.

When babies are about two weeks old, they tend to cry more than when first born. Some babies cry as much as 5 hours a day. Your baby may cry more in late afternoon and evening. While frustrating, know it's temporary and will probably end by the time your baby is 3 or 4 months old.

By crying, your baby could be telling you:

- I need something to change.
- 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.
- Something is wrong.  
Check to see if I'm sick.
- I am hungry.
- I am afraid.
- I am tired.



## \* What can you do?

You want to comfort him and help him feel safe, but how?

Follow these suggestions:

1. Try to figure out the reason for the crying.
2. Hold your baby close to you.
3. Do the same thing over and over. For example:
  - Speak or sing softly.
  - Rock, sway, or bounce your baby gently.
  - Gently massage his back, arms, and legs.

Stick with what you're doing for a few minutes before you try something new – this can be the secret to success. If your baby keeps crying or gets more upset, then move onto something else on the list.

Remember to be patient. As your baby grows older you'll learn to recognize what your baby needs.



## What if you still feel frustrated?

Calming a crying baby takes time. This can be tiring for new parents. Find ways to keep yourself calm while your baby is crying.

- Ask a friend or family member to give you a break by helping with your baby.
- If you start to feel angry or upset, lay your baby down in a safe place for a few minutes and take a break. Never shake your baby.
- Keep in mind, babies cry less and less as they get older. Things will get better!
- Contact WIC or your doctor if you think your baby is crying too much.

## What if nothing seems to help?

Call your doctor or clinic for help if your baby has:

- A body temperature above 99°F
- Watery stools
- Vomiting
- Fewer than 6 to 8 wet diapers in a day
- A skin rash
- Crying that will not stop



If you or your partner get upset with your baby's constant crying, call your doctor, a friend, or the Shaken Baby Alliance at 1-877-636-3727 (1-800-6-END-SBS), 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. or ChildHelp USA 1-800-422-4453 (1-800-4-A-CHILD) anytime.

For more information on infant crying visit the Mayo Clinic <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/healthy-baby/PR00037> or search for “crying baby” on Medline Plus <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus>

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