

# A Life in Your Hands: Preventing SBS- What is Shaken Baby Syndrome?

*"You're alright. You're fine. Please stop. Michael, come here. What's wrong? Stop that right now, Okay? Stop that! Stop it!!"*

*"In a matter of seconds."*

*"In absolute seconds."*

*"The moment of rage."*

*"Within seconds."*

*"Coleman's life was shattered."*

*"Dawson's going to probably have to have somebody looking after him the rest of his life."*

*"That we can't undo it. Once it's done, it's done."*

Injuries from Shaken Baby Syndrome can include: brain damage, blindness, paralysis, seizures, fractures, spinal cord injury, learning disabilities, or death. No amount of shaking is ever okay. Vigorous shaking, even for a few moments, can injure or kill a baby.

*"Sometimes when parents or other caregivers become so frustrated or angry with their infant they will shake them, or slam them against an object, or throw them down."*

Young babies are very susceptible to injury because their head is large compared to their body. Their neck muscles are very weak, and their brain is not yet developed. Violent infant shaking can cause the baby's head to whip back and forth, or around uncontrollably. The brain shifts inside of the skull and can be injured. Tiny blood vessels can tear and cause bleeding in the baby's brain and on its surface.

Shaking can also damage the baby's eyes, causing bleeding in the retina that can lead to loss of vision or permanent blindness. The force of an angry adult shaking an infant can cause injury to the ligaments and muscles of the spine, as well as damage to the spinal cord and nerves. Almost three fourths of infants who die from shaking have injuries to the neck or spinal cord.

When the baby's chest is squeezed during violent shaking ribs can break, especially in the back where they connect to the baby's spine.

These are all very serious, potentially life-threatening injuries.

*"Coleman was a premature baby, typically healthy, normal child. He was released to his mother and his father, which was my son. On the day that Coleman was shaken, was that he was crying non-stop, my son became frustrated and lost control and shook Coleman. According to the doctors, they thought that Coleman seized somewhere between twenty-four and and I believe forty-eight hours before he was taken to the hospital. My son did not admit to shaking him, though at that point. It was, from my understanding, many stories prior to him finally confessing of shaking Coleman."*

This program is for informational purposes only. Publisher disclaims all guarantees regarding the accuracy, completeness, or suitability of this video for medical decision making. For all health related issues please contact your healthcare provider.

**healthclips**