

# Soothe Your Baby

All babies cry: some more than others. It's a normal way for them to communicate. But it can be unsettling for new parents. In time you may be able to decipher what a certain cry means, but when you're not sure, address your baby's basic needs first.

Check to see if she's hungry. Breastfed newborns generally eat every two to three hours. Does your baby have a wet or dirty diaper? Could her clothing be too tight or making her too hot or too cold? Change her diaper or clothing and see if that helps. Your baby could be cranky because she's tired or over stimulated. Dim the lights and give her some quiet time in her crib. Many babies just want to be picked up and held.

Don't worry about spoiling your baby. Newborn babies need a lot of attention and affection. Sometimes your baby will cry for no apparent reason. While it can be discouraging, these simple soothing techniques may be the solution. Babies often like a little motion. Gently rock your baby in a rocking chair.

Or put her in a baby swing. For babies under four months, you'll want to use the lowest speed and recline the seat as far back as it will go. It's not a good idea to let babies sleep in their swings for any length of time, so if your baby is nodding off, relocate her to a safe sleep environment.

Walk with your baby. Give her a ride in a stroller or take her for a drive in the car. Babies enjoy soothing sounds. Quietly sing or talk to your baby. Turn on music or white noise. Sounds of a hair dryer, vacuum, or fan can have a calming effect.

Babies like to feel warm and snug. Safely swaddle your baby in a thin blanket or try holding your baby in different positions. Some babies like it when you hold them on their side or stomach. Give your baby a warm bath and a gentle massage.

Eventually you'll learn what works best for your baby, and the sound of quiet coos will be music to your ears.