

Comforting Your Crying Newborn

Crying is your baby's way of communicating to you. Crying may indicate that your newborn is hungry, tired, over excited, frustrated, wet, too warm, or cold, lonely, or sick. Answer your crying baby and try to determine what's wrong.

"You're so upset. Oh, you're so upset."

Babies like to be touched and held so cuddle with your baby or use a sling to help your baby feel secure. Another thing that can make your baby feel more secure and safe is swaddling. Wrapping or swaddling surrounds your newborn with a warm, soft surface. It helps the baby sleep, keeps away drafts, and holds your baby securely. When you were pregnant, your baby was comforted by your movements, heartbeat, voice, and the other sounds of life. Now movements like rocking or swinging can help calm crying and so can rhythmic tones such as shushing.

"Shh, shh, shhh, shhh. Shh, shhh, shhh."

Soft music, a recorded heartbeat, or a fan. Many babies fall asleep while they're in motion. So, you may want to take your baby for a relaxing walk outside, or for a ride in the car. This can be beneficial, but you don't want to get your baby in the habit of needing to go for a drive to calm down or to go to sleep.

But when a baby cannot be comforted, colic may be the reason. Colic is a term used to describe extreme fussiness and crying that usually occurs at the same time each day. No one knows for sure what causes colic. It usually begins two weeks after birth and disappears after three to four months. If your baby is very fussy, and difficult to comfort, call your baby's healthcare provider. While the frustrations of comforting a newborn can be intense at times, it's important to find ways to cope. Keep in mind that shaking your baby can cause permanent damage and even death.

When you need to, take a break from your child, and have someone else like a relative or friend take over for a while. But talk with your pediatrician for more suggestions on how to deal with colic. Your baby needs all the love and attention you can share, so try different calming techniques, and eventually you'll learn your child's favorite and most effective ways to relax. Remember, you can't spoil your newborn with too much hugging, cuddling, snuggling and love.