

Keeping Baby Safe: How to Prevent a Head Injury

This video was developed to help prevent a head injury to your baby. Head injuries can happen because a crying baby can be hard to deal with.

Crying is a normal part of every baby's development.

But some babies cry a lot, even when they're not hungry, wet, sick, or in pain.

Even when you know to expect it, a lot of crying can be hard to take.

And even more so if you're stressed or tired, which most parents are.

When you've tried everything to calm your baby and nothing works, you can feel helpless, alone, frustrated, or even angry.

But there are things you can do—for you—to keep from totally losing it.

You can: Pause, take a deep breath, and count to 10.

Call a friend, neighbor, or relative for support.

You can also search online for a parent help line, a free service that can answer your questions and offer guidance and support.

Call your baby's doctor.

Walk away.

Put your baby down in a safe place—on their back, in a crib—and check on them every 5 to 10 minutes.

It's important to be aware that the intense feeling— that feeling of not being able to make the crying stop— can sometimes make a parent lose control and harm their baby.

But using force never helps calm a fragile baby.

And shaking or hitting a baby—even just one time, even without meaning to—could lead to a head injury. It can cause permanent damage like blindness, brain damage, and even death.

But leaving your baby alone in a safe place and continuing to check on them every few minutes will not harm your baby. And it might give you the break you need.

When you know what you can do to cope, you can prevent long-term problems for your baby and your family.

And you can share these ideas or this video with other people who care for your baby.

At the same time, you can ask if they would support you during those times when you might need it.

So, think about it now: How will you calm down?

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Who will you call?

And how will you take care of yourself?

Because when you do something nice for yourself by taking regular, small breaks, it can be a lot easier to deal with tough parenting moments.

And, lastly, how will you remember—in the heat of the moment, when so much is at stake—that the best thing to tell yourself, and the best way to care for the baby you love so much, may just be: "It's okay. Walk away."