

Secrets of Baby Behavior



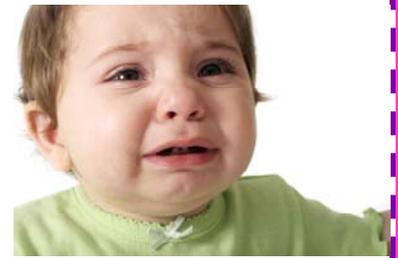
Infant Behavior
Birth-3 months



Secrets of Baby Behavior

How to Better Understand Your Baby

It can be **hard to know** what your baby is trying to communicate to you when he/she can't talk!! But, **your baby can tell you what he is thinking or feeling with his noises and body movements.** You and your baby will soon develop your own **special language** that you use to communicate with each other.



Clues to Why Babies Cry

- ◆ **Hearing your baby cry can be stressful!**
- ◆ **Some parents find it easier when they understand why their baby cries.**
- ◆ **Babies need to cry sometimes, but knowing why your baby cries can help you prevent some crying.**
- ◆ **There are many reasons babies cry.**
- ◆ **Babies actually have ways other than crying to tell us what they need. Babies use their bodies and noises to tell us what they need – We call these 'baby cues.'**
- ◆ **There are two main cues:**
 - when babies want to be near you, or
 - when they need a break or something different

“I want to be near you!”

How does your baby tell you she wants to be near you? Babies tell us they want to be near us by :

- ♥ Keeping their eyes open and their face relaxed
- ♥ Trying to reach toward us
- ♥ Lifting their faces and smiling if they are old enough

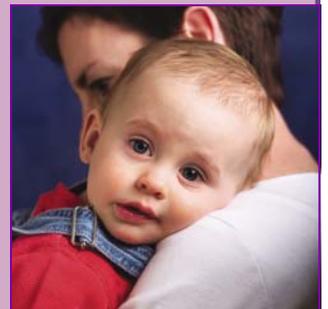


“I need a break!”

How does your baby tell you he needs a break or something different? When babies need a break or a change they:

- ♥ Turn their heads or their whole bodies away for a moment
- ♥ They can stiffen up their bodies and fuss a little
- ♥ They might yawn, rub their eyes, or give you other tired signs

Often giving your baby a little break or soothing him will stop him from getting more upset and calm him more quickly.



“You can prevent me from crying if you **watch** for my cues!”



There are **many reasons** babies cry. Here are just a few things to check when your baby cries:



Why Babies Cry

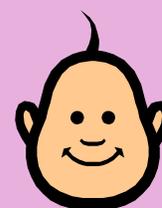
- ✓ Dirty Diaper
- ✓ Too hot or cold
- ✓ Tired
- ✓ Too loud or bright in the room
- ✓ Wants to be near you
- ✓ Wants to do something different
- ✓ Hungry
- ✓ Lonely

“I’m Hungry!”

It’s true that some babies cry because of hunger, but there are lots of other reasons babies cry. Look for other clues that your baby is hungry such as:

- ◆ Bringing hands to mouth
- ◆ Sucking on things
- ◆ Tight fists over tummy
- ◆ Awake and alert

WIC is here to help you better understand your baby!
Just ask us!



~How Babies Sleep~

Understanding why and when babies wake up can help tired parents. Babies and adults sleep very differently. Babies sleep 13-14 hours per day from 2 -12 months old, **but not all at one time.** Babies and adults both wake up at night, but sometimes it is harder for babies to get back to sleep. **Waking is actually very healthy** for babies. When babies sleep, part of the time they sleep deeply and part of the time, they sleep lightly.

“I will
wake up
if I need
your help.”



Two
types
of
Sleep:

Deep sleep (which we call **Quiet sleep**), where it is a lot harder to wake babies up and they don't dream.

Light sleep (which we call **Active sleep**), where **babies dream** and they are **easy to wake up**.



Have you noticed any signs that your baby is dreaming?

Some signs that your baby is dreaming are: smiles or cries in sleep, eye movement, body twitches, or makes noises in sleep.

For babies, dreaming is **very important** because while they dream, blood flows up to their brains bringing nutrients and other things that they need for their brains to grow and develop.

When they are dreaming, it is easier to wake babies up. But **babies need to wake up sometimes** to feed, to stay warm, and sometimes to breathe.

So waking and dreaming are important to keep babies' brains and bodies healthy. We know it is tough, but the good news is that it doesn't last forever.

As they get older, babies will wake up less and less!

~ Back to Sleep ~



“Help prevent SIDS: Put me to sleep on my back!”



If they are having a hard time breathing, babies will be able to wake up more easily when they sleep on their backs. This will help prevent your baby from developing a **deadly condition called “SIDS”** or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.



Many people **think** babies choke when put to sleep on their backs, but studies show **this is not true**. Babies that sleep on their backs will also be **healthier and smarter** because they spend more time in active or light sleep and dreaming.