



Helping Your Baby Sleep, 3-9 months

Well-rested babies and parents are happy, content babies and parents. Getting enough sleep allows your baby to be alert and ready to interact while awake. Your sleep is just as important as your baby's. When both you and your baby are well rested, your interactions will stay positive. These loving interactions form the foundation of a secure attachment with your baby. If you can, rest or take naps with your baby. Ask for help from friends or family.

Keep in Mind

- On average, younger babies sleep for 14 to 15 hours in a 24-hour period. Without enough sleep, your baby may be fussy and less able to engage in positive interactions with you.
- By 4 months, some babies sleep as long as 6 to 10 hours at night. Others still wake up for night feedings, but this may end around 6 months. Your baby needs to take naps during the day.
- Being close to you while sleeping lets your baby hear you and feel safe. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that the safest place for a baby to sleep is in the same room as you but not in your bed. Always put your baby to sleep on their back (not on their tummy).
- Some babies wake up at night but just need to know that you are close. If your baby wakes up, try calming them first with gentle touch or quiet talk before feeding.
- Babies are sensitive and can become easily stressed. Stress may lead to sleep or other behavior problems. Create a calm, consistent environment for your baby so they feel safe and secure and can rest well.

Suggestions

- Create a consistent routine for naptimes and bedtime. For example, at bedtime, give your baby a warm bath, snuggle up for stories, and then put your baby to bed. Routines help your baby understand and prepare for the next activity. This gives your baby a sense of security.
- Put your baby to bed when they are drowsy (not asleep). Feed your baby just before bedtime, but try not to feed your baby to sleep. Give your baby their fingers (or a pacifier) to suck on. These actions begin to teach your baby to self-soothe and fall asleep on their own.
- Keep the room where your baby sleeps cool, dark, and quiet. This helps your baby realize when it's time to sleep.

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3-9 months



Helping Your Baby Sleep, 3-9 months *(continued)*

SUGGESTIONS *(continued)*

- Here are some tips for helping your baby fall asleep:
 - Keep interactions calm, positive, and loving while helping your baby fall asleep.
 - Talk quietly, hum, or sing to your baby.
 - Walk or rock your baby in a rocking chair. Gently pat or stroke your baby.
 - Some noises may help your baby relax. Some babies like white noise, such as the sound of a clothes dryer or a vacuum cleaner. Other babies like soft music. Try different sounds to see which ones help your baby relax.
- Here are some suggestions for handling your baby's cries at night:
 - Decide with other adults in your baby's life how you will handle it when your baby cries at night. For example, you might decide to take turns when the baby wakes up. This helps your baby learn to trust that other caregivers can meet their needs, and it also lets you get more sleep.
 - Wait a little before responding. Your baby may be able to self-calm, or regulate, on their own and return to sleep.
 - Speak to your baby in a gentle voice and use a gentle touch.
 - If you need to feed your baby, stay quiet and keep the lights down.
- If you need to wake your baby, go slowly and gently. Talk to your baby lovingly, and let them know why you are waking them.

Questions? Concerns? Talk to your health care provider.