



Help for crying babies

The average baby cries for as much as 2 hours a day* and this is often related to hunger, a dirty nappy or tiredness. When a baby cries, it can be hard to cope with, but understanding some of the reasons why and sharing other parent's advice can be helpful. The following checklist may help to soothe your baby.

*(Journal of Pediatrics June 2017)

Is baby hungry?

- Offer breast or bottle feed.

Is baby thirsty?

- Offer a drink from a sterilised spoon or bottle.

Is baby in pain?

- Check for a temperature.
- Offer breast, bottle or dummy.
- Speak to a pharmacist about infant colic remedies.
- Try gently massaging baby's tummy in a clockwise direction.
- Try changing baby's position.
- Pick baby up, walk around with him/her – a baby sling can be helpful.
- Try gently rocking baby up and down.

Is baby tired but fighting sleep?

- Offer breast, bottle or dummy.
- Try rocking baby horizontally in your arms or in a buggy.
- Try a swinging crib.
- Try a quieter room.
- Fussing with a baby can keep them awake, so putting your baby down to cry somewhere safe for a short period can help baby to sleep.
- Try a softer light or a darker room.
- Use a baby soother CD or App or sing to your baby.
- Quiet background noise can soothe babies such as a ticking clock, vacuum cleaner, washing machine etc.
- Check that baby is comfortable and their clothes are not too tight.

- Check baby isn't too hot or cold by feeling tummy to check temperature.
- Motion can help babies sleep such as a car ride or buggy ride in the fresh air.
- A warm bath covering baby's tummy can be soothing.

Is baby fighting at the breast?

- Check baby's position at the breast, most of your nipple should be inside the baby's mouth.
- Check baby's nose is free of the breast (his/her head should be tilted back slightly).
- Check whether baby's nose is blocked and if so, consult your GP, Health Visitor or NHS Direct.
- Let baby suck on a dummy before swapping to breast.
- Try changing feeding position e.g. sitting up or lying down.
- Is there too much milk? If so, express some off before feeds or feed on one breast and change sides at each feed for a few days.
- Is there too little milk? If so, feed more frequently.
- Consult Health Visitor, GP, National Childbirth Trust (NCT) counsellor or NHS Direct if you are still experiencing problems.

Difficulty bottle feeding?

- Try a different bottle or teat.
- Check the size of the teat hole and change to a different size if necessary.
- Try offering bottles more frequently for a few days.
- Leave for half an hour, and then try again.
- Consult Health Visitor, GP, National Childbirth Trust (NCT) counsellor or NHS Direct if you are still experiencing problems.

Is baby uncomfortable?

- Check baby's temperature by feeling tummy and adjust clothing accordingly.
- Change baby's nappy.
- Try different nappies.
- Let baby kick, nappy-free.
- Check for nappy rash – consult Health Visitor.
- Check for clothing rashes.

Sensitive baby?

- Handle and talk to baby gently and quietly.
- Do not overwhelm baby with stimulation.
- Try a quieter environment.
- Try to keep to a routine and limit the number of visitors.

Is baby generally cranky?

- Check for temperature.
- Talk to your baby.

- Play with him/her: use toys or safe household objects.
- Let baby kick, nappy-free.
- Try using a baby sling to carry baby around.
- Try a bouncing chair or baby bouncer (always follow manufacturers guidelines).
- Take baby out in a buggy.
- Visit a friend.
- Comfort by gentle rocking movement or soothing noises.
- Offer baby a feed.
- Massage baby and give warm bath.
- Consult registered Cranial Osteopath or Chiropractor with paediatric qualification .
- If you suspect Colic, speak to GP or Health Visitor about infant colic remedies.

Does baby have Colic?

- Symptoms of colic include: crying in the late afternoon or evening that lasts several hours, baby's face being red and flushed when they cry and baby clenching their fists, drawing their knees up to their tummy, or arching their back while crying.
- If baby has colic, try the following suggestions:
 - Try to prevent baby from swallowing air by sitting or holding them upright during feeding.
 - Try to burp baby after feed.
 - Try gently rocking baby over your shoulder.
 - Try massaging baby's tummy.
 - A warm bath covering baby's tummy can be soothing .
 - Using Simeticone drops, such as Infacol (which is a supplement that can be added to your baby's bottle of breast milk before feed) can help release bubbles of trapped air in the baby's digestive system.
 - Consult your GP, Health Visitor or NHS Direct for more information.

Still crying?

- Put baby down in a safe place, walk out of the room and shut the door, take a short break.
- Give baby to a trusted friend or family member for a few hours if possible.
- Use any time away from baby to look after yourself, make sure you eat well and unwind.
- Go out with baby.
- Phone your GP, Health Visitor, NHS Direct, The Cry-sis Helpline, friend or relative.

Night-time Crying

- Make sure baby is not hungry or thirsty.
- Check that baby is comfortable, that his/her nappy is dry and clothes are not too tight.
- Is baby too hot or too cold? Check baby's tummy temperature.
- Rhythmic movement often settles babies. Gentle rocking in a pram or crib can have a hypnotic effect. Baby Slings are useful as they provide continual movement and the security of Mum/Dad.
- Some babies prefer the dark, others like a low night light.

- Soother CDs and Apps may help baby fall asleep. It's worth trying to get into a bedtime routine. This is best introduced as soon as possible with perhaps a warm bath before bedtime and a quiet feed and cuddle before sleep.
- From 3 months babies are becoming more aware of their environment, so other methods of settling them to sleep can be considered. Mobiles and soft play things above the cot prevent boredom and make baby's cot a more enjoyable place to be.
- As baby gets older a soft toy can be encouraged so that baby feels more secure when on his/her own. Soft toys in the cot can act as insulators – avoid overheating baby.
- Many babies find their own fingers or thumbs to suck for comfort.

You can contact the
CRY-SIS HELPLINE
08451 228669

Lines Open 7 Days a Week 9am – 10pm