

HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CRYING BABY

BABIES CRY...

Sometimes we cry a lot. Crying is the only way we can tell you what we need. We are not crying to be disobedient. In fact, as babies, we are too immature to understand adult expectations. For instance, if we are crying and you tell us to stop and we continue, it is not because we are defying you. We are simply too young to understand your words. When we cry, we are sending you a message that we are either hungry, sleepy, need a diaper change, or we are just being a baby.



A BABY CRIES FOR MANY REASONS...

I cry because there is something I want to tell you.

Sometimes I cry to tell you:

- I am hungry.
- I have a gas pain.
- I am too cold or too hot.
- Something scared me.
- I am sick or hurt.
- I am bored or lonely.
- There is too much noise.
- I am being held by too many different people.
- My diaper is wet and I need to be changed.
- I am tired.

Sometimes I cry when I think you are feeling upset or grumpy.

Sometimes I am just fussy because:

- I do not know how to settle down.
- I am in a bad mood.

You may feel frustrated, angry, helpless or worried if you do not know why I am crying, how to comfort me, or how to keep me from crying so much.

THE PERIOD OF PURPLE CRYING® ...

When a baby cries more often, this is called PURPLE Crying®. PURPLE is an acronym used to describe this phase.

- **P-** *Peak of crying.* I may cry more each week. It generally begins at 2 weeks of age and lasts until I am 3 to 5 months old, with the peak around 2 months.
- **U-** *Unexpected.* I will cry off and on, and you will not know why.
- **R-** *Resists soothing.* Even though you might try everything you can think to, I may not quit crying.
- **P-** *Pain-like face.* I might make a face that looks like I am in pain, even if I really am not.
- **L-** *Long lasting.* I might cry up to 5 hours a day or more.
- **E-** *Evening.* I might cry more in the late afternoon and evening.

Remember that the word “period” means that the crying has a start and an end. Just carry me, talk with me, comfort me and walk with me.

Never leave me with someone who is easily frustrated and could shake me. This can cause permanent brain damage.

This information was adapted from the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome’s The Period of PURPLE Crying® website, www.purplecrying.info. Visit this website for more helpful information about The Period of PURPLE Crying®.

HELP ME TO BE HAPPY MOST OF THE TIME...

Each baby is different.

Get to know me and what I need. Learn that I have different cries that mean different things. One cry means that I want to eat. Another cry means that I want to do something else.

By thinking about what I need, you can help me stay happy. Knowing what I do not like can help prevent me from being fussy.

- Be sure to change my diaper if I am wet or dirty. Like most babies, I will need to be changed at least every three hours while I am awake.
- Make sure I am not too hot or too cold.
- Do not feed me more milk than I need. I will tell you when I have had enough.
- Do not feed me cereal or solid food without talking to my doctor first.
- Do not leave me in an infant seat too long. I like to do many activities. I may fuss to tell you that I want to do something else.

I need to suck.

- Let me suck as much as I want to, either on a pacifier or my fingers.
- Try different pacifiers until I find one that I like.

I need to learn that I belong to my parents.

- You cannot spoil me at this age. When I learn that you will help me, I will cry less.
- Spend as much time with me as you can when I am awake.
- Touch, hold, hug, cuddle and love me.
- Talk to me.
- Walk or rock me.
- Come to me as soon as you can when I cry.

As a young baby, I need lots of sleep and quiet time.

- Let me sleep a lot if I want to.
- Place me in a quiet place. I do not like a lot of noise and I do not need a lot of visitors.

As I get older, I will want to do more things with you.

- Play with me and talk with me.
- I will tell you when I am tired of doing something by fussing or turning my head away.

I like a routine.

- Try to do things the same way and at the same time as much as possible.

TRY TO FIND OUT WHY I AM CRYING...

Look to see if:

- I am wet or have a dirty diaper.
- I am too hot or too cold.
- I am hungry.
- I am too full.
- I need to burp.
- I have a stomachache.
- I am tired.
- I could be upset by something you ate if you are breast-feeding. If you are breast-feeding, avoid drinking coffee, tea or cola, and avoid eating spicy foods and foods that cause gas.

Is there too much going on?

- Is there too much noise in the room?
- Are there too many people holding or touching me?
- Are people smoking around me?

Am I sick?

- Do I have a fever?
- Am I vomiting?
- Have I had a bowel movement in a while?
- Do I have loose bowels or diarrhea?
- Do I have diaper rash or some other rash?
- Do I have a cold or runny nose?
- Am I pulling on my ears? This may be a clue that I have an ear infection.
- If I have any of these problems, check with my doctor to see if I am sick.

To help me stop crying:

- Pick me up and hold me. Holding and cuddling me tells me that you love me and that you want me to feel better.
- Snuggle or wrap me in a blanket.
- Talk or sing to me.
- Play soft music.
- Lower the lights.
- Give me something to look at or something to play with.
- Give me a pacifier.
- Sit with me in a rocking chair.
- Walk or dance with me.
- Take me for a ride in the car or stroller.

If nothing works and you begin to feel upset or frustrated:

- Put me in a safe place like a crib that is within hearing distance. Let me cry alone for 15 minutes. Sometimes I get overtired and need a chance to settle down.
- Ask someone to come over and care for me while you relax and have some time for yourself.

NEVER SHAKE ME!

No matter how upset or angry you feel, do not shake me. Shaking me can cause brain damage or even death. I will outgrow this constant crying. Go to www.dontshake.org to learn more ways to soothe me.