



CRYING BABY? A GUIDE TO COPING

General Checklist

The suggestions in this checklist are all ways in which parents have helped soothe their babies or coped with excessive crying. You may find that some of them work for you.

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 illness with G.P or Health Visitor
- Offer breast, bottle or dummy
- Offer cool boiled water or speak to 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 pram/pushchair
- Try a rocking or swinging cradle
- Try a quieter room
- Put baby down somewhere safe to cry for a short time – some babies settle themselves
- Try a softer light or a darker room
- Use a baby soother cassette or sing to your baby
- Quiet background noise can soothe babies – ticking clock, vacuum cleaner, washing machine etc.
- Check that baby is comfortable – clothes not too tight
- Check baby isn't too hot or cold – feel tummy to gauge temperature
- Motion can help babies sleep. Car rides or pram walks 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 consult GP or Health Visitor accordingly
- Let baby suck on a dummy before quickly substituting 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 changing sides at each feed for a few days
- Is there too little milk? Feed more frequently
- Consult Health Visitor, GP or a National Childbirth Trust (NCT) counsellor 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 or GP

Is baby uncomfortable?

- Check baby's temperature by feeling tummy – 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 illness – consult Health Visitor or GP
- 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 pram or buggy
- Visit a friend
- Comfort by gentle rocking movement or soothing noises
- Offer baby a feed
- Massage baby and give warm bath
- Consult registered homeopath. Check with GP, Health Visitor
- Consult registered Cranial Osteopath with paediatric experience
- If you suspect Colic, speak to GP or Health Visitor about infant colic remedies

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
- 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

Checklist and ideas for settling a baby under a year old

- Make sure baby is not hungry or thirsty
- Check that baby is comfortable and that his/her nappy is clean and dry
- Make sure clothing is 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 tapes and devices may help baby fall asleep. A bedtime routine is a worthwhile investment for the future. 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 particular toy or "cuddly" 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