

Babies & Crying

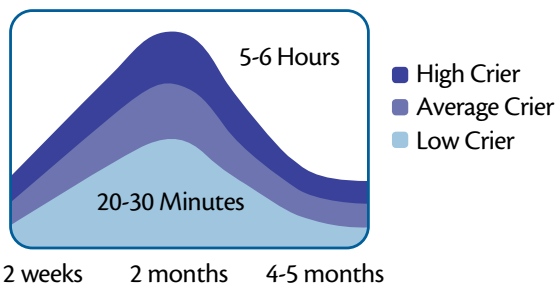
All babies cry. Crying is how babies tell you that they need something. Some babies cry more than others.

Understanding why your baby might be crying can help you soothe your baby. Sometimes a baby cannot be comforted, no matter how hard you try. You may feel overwhelmed and it may be comforting to know that many parents have these feelings.

If you soothe your baby throughout the day (not just when baby cries) it may help reduce how much and how hard your baby cries.



Length of Time Crying in 24 Hours



Source: <http://www.purplecrying.info>
Used with permission from the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome

Never shake a baby!

Babies have weak necks and heavy heads. Even a few seconds of shaking can cause serious injury such as blindness, inability to walk, brain damage, or death.

A crying baby...

- is not being bad
- is not angry with you
- does not mean that you are a bad parent

Most babies

- Start crying at birth
- Cry the most at about 2 months
- Start crying less at 3-5 months

Babies Cry for Many Reasons

If your baby is crying and... Your baby may ... You can try...



- Is opening his or her mouth, rooting

- Be hungry

- Feeding



- Is making facial grimaces or straining

- Have gas pain

- Burping your baby
- Rubbing and gently patting baby's back or stomach



- Is reaching out to you

- Needs to be held or touched

- Holding baby to your chest
- Carrying baby in a carrier or sling
- Gently rubbing tummy or back



- Has very cold ears or calves
- Skin looks marbled
- Nails or lips are blue

- Be too cold

- Holding baby close to you
- Adding a layer of clothing



- Is rubbing his or her eyes or has droopy eyelids
- Is yawning
- Is moving head side to side

- Be tired

- Putting baby down for a nap



- Keeps looking away

- Be overstimulated

- Reducing noise, light and movement
- Singing or "shushing" gently
- Taking baby to a quiet room

Babies Cry for Many Reasons

If your baby is crying and...

Your baby may ...

You can try...



- Has a wet or soiled diaper

- Be uncomfortable or his or her skin is being irritated

- Changing baby's diaper
- Using a cream if he or she has a rash
- Giving some time without a diaper



- Is sweating on the back of the neck
- Has warm ears or calves

- Be too hot

- Removing some clothing
- Taking baby to a cooler location



- Wants your attention

- Be bored

- Talking, singing & playing with baby
- Changing his or her position



- Wants to relax or be soothed

- Want to be breastfed or may need to suck

- Breastfeeding
- Letting baby suck on his or her hand
- Holding your baby skin-to-skin
- Singing to your baby
- Rocking your baby gently



- Just keeps crying!

- Just needs to cry

- Putting on some white noise, like a vacuum cleaner
- Any of the above tips

You know your baby best. If you think he or she might be sick, contact your doctor, public health nurse, or call Health Links - Info Santé anytime at (204) 788-8200 or toll-free 1-888-315-9257.

Staying Calm When Your Baby Cries

Sometimes a baby will continue to cry even though he or she is not sick, hungry or needing a diaper change. This can feel overwhelming. Staying calm is the best way to soothe your baby.

When you are calm, it is easier to listen and discover what your baby needs.



Remember, you're not alone.
All babies go through a crying phase.
It won't last forever.

These tips can help you relax, stay calm and cope while your baby is crying.

Take a break.

Gently place your baby on his or her back in the crib and leave the room. Check on your baby every 5 to 10 minutes. Your baby will be safe and you can use the time to calm down.

Breathe slowly.

Take 3-10 long, slow breaths through your nose to feel calmer.

Think positive thoughts.

Tell yourself

"I love my baby"

"I am getting calmer"

"My baby is okay"

"I am a good parent"

Think of a relaxing place or a nice memory.

Be active.

Put on a favorite song and dance. Jog on the spot. Do an exercise DVD.

Tense, hold, and relax.

Sit or lay down and close your eyes. Tense your feet for a second or two, then release them. Feel how relaxed your feet are for a few moments. Do this through your body from your feet, calves, thighs, buttocks, stomach, shoulders, arms, hands, to your face.

Ask for help.

If you need a break, let your partner, neighbour or family member care for your baby.

Call a friend or family member.

Ask them to come over for company or talk on the phone. Share your feelings with them.

It's okay to ask for help!

Who can you call for support or a chat?

List them here.
