



Why do babies cry?

Sometimes it is easy to figure out why a baby is crying. Sometimes it is not. Crying is normal and some babies cry more than others. Most often, babies cry because they are hungry, need a diaper change or want to be comforted. Sometimes babies cry because they just need to release some tension of their own.

Crying is an annoying sound. It is supposed to be. If it was a pleasant sound, crying would be easy to ignore and the baby's needs would not be met.

Crying may mean that your baby is not feeling well. If you are worried, take the baby to a doctor.

Crying does not mean your baby is being bad or that the baby is angry with you.

Many caregivers and parents become frustrated and angry when caring for a crying baby.

You may be feeling...

**tired,
alone,**

like your efforts are not good enough.

Many people feel this way.

Remember, it is more important to stay calm than to stop the crying.



BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministry for Children and Families



For further information, contact your local health unit.

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MCF162

IDEAL



WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR BABY WON'T STOP CRYING



REAL

What can you do?

There is no magic answer that works all of the time with every baby. You may have to try several things before you find out what works best for you and your baby. Stay calm and try some of these ideas:

Snuggle the baby close to your chest

Your heartbeat may comfort the baby.

Check the baby's diaper

Keep the baby clean and dry.

Feed the baby slowly and burp the baby often

Gas in the baby's tummy can be painful.

If you are breastfeeding, avoid eating gas-producing foods like beans, spicy foods and caffeine (coffee, tea, cola).

Wrap the baby in a soft blanket

Keep the baby warm and comfortable but not too hot.

Provide some soft music or other relaxing sounds

You can try humming or singing a lullaby. The sound of the vacuum cleaner, clothes dryer or dishwasher sometimes calms a baby.

Offer a soother or teething ring

Offer a favourite blanket or soft toy while cuddling the baby.

Provide gentle motion

Walk with or rock the baby.

Use a baby swing if you have one.

Take the baby for a walk in a stroller.

Some babies like to go for a car ride (be sure the baby is safely secured in an infant car seat).

Let the baby "cry it out"

Before your emotions get out of control, gently place the baby in a safe place and leave the room. Take a 15 minute break to give yourself a chance to calm down. Letting the baby cry for a few minutes is not harmful

Find someone to help you

Call a friend or relative you can trust.

It is important to get away from the baby if you think you might lose control.

It is just as important to be sure that the baby will be safe while you are gone.

If the crying is constant or louder than usual, or the baby has a fever or is vomiting, go to the hospital or health clinic.

It's okay to ask for help.

Who can help?

Family

Friends

Your child's doctor

Parent groups

Your public health nurse

or

call your local hospital or health clinic for other contacts in your community.

Never shake a baby!

Because babies have weak neck muscles and heavy heads, even a few seconds of forceful shaking can cause serious damage to babies and small children.

Shaking a baby in a moment of frustration can cause blindness, brain damage or death.

Although it is unlikely that injuries would occur from playing with an infant, parents and caregivers should always consider how easily an infant's brain could be hurt. Always support an infant's head and neck. Even minor injuries to a baby's brain can cause lifelong problems.

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