



What is Infant Sleep?

Babies do not have regular sleep cycles until about 6 months of age. While newborns sleep about 16 to 17 hours per day, they may only sleep for 1 or 2 hours at a time. Frequent waking is developmentally appropriate for babies. Talk to your baby's pediatrician if you have any concerns about how they are sleeping.

Sleeping in a safe sleep space can be a hard adjustment for baby from the warmth of the womb. It may take time for them to adapt. While it can be a struggle for both baby and caregivers, there are tips to help.

Finding Support

While frequent waking for baby is normal and healthy, it can be very difficult for parents. Being stressed and exhausted can make settling baby back to sleep even harder.

Take a deep breath. Count to 5.

- Ask family members, friends, or someone you trust to watch baby while you nap or catch up on sleep.
- Talk to your Pediatrician about strategies specific to your child's needs.
- PCAVT's Parent Helpline 1-800-CHILDREN (244-5373).

For more information, visit
UVMHealth.org/SafeSleep



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Sleep Tips for Babies



Why isn't my baby sleeping?



When babies who normally sleep well suddenly starts struggling to settle for sleep or waking up more frequently at night, it is known as “sleep regression”. While difficult, this is normal and expected.

Sleep regression can be caused by a number of things including:

- Teething
- Growth Spurts
- Developmental Milestones
- New Environments
- Illness

While there is nothing that can prevent sleep regression, by sticking to your baby’s normal bedtime routine and creating a calming environment, it should pass.

Tips for Bedtime

- Create a consistent calming bedtime routine. A routine can be as simple as feed, change, and then off to sleep.
- Create an environment that encourages sleep, such as darkening the room with window covers or playing white noise.
- Pay attention to signs of being sleepy or overtired. If your baby is 4 months or older, put them to bed when they are drowsy. This helps babies learn to fall asleep on their own, in their own bed.
- Help baby fall asleep with a soothing sensation, such as rocking or sucking a thumb, hand, or pacifier.



Sometimes babies can't be soothed and that's okay. It does not harm a child's development. If you are stressed or overwhelmed, take care of yourself first and let baby stay in the safety of the crib. Crying is not harmful if you need space.

Tips for Overnight

- Stay calm and quiet when you feed or change your baby.
- If your baby is 4 months or older, do not rush in to soothe them. They may go back to sleep by themselves after a few minutes.



- If they need help resettling, consider the following tips.
 - ◇ Look at and talk or sing to them.
 - ◇ Put a hand on their belly or chest.
 - ◇ Hold and rock or rub their back.
 - ◇ Swaddle your baby if not yet showing signs of rolling.
 - ◇ Place a pacifier in their mouth (or assist them to get their hand or thumb to their mouth to suck).
 - ◇ Offer milk or formula.
- Avoid putting your baby in an unsafe sleep space, such as in a swing or in your bed during the night.