California BABY BEHAVIOR Campaign

UNDERSTANDING

Your Newborn Baby's Behavior

ACTIVITY 1

Your Baby's Sleep

Babies must wake up at night to let parents know they need something. Waking is normal and keeps babies safe and healthy. As babies get older, they sleep for longer periods of time and wake up less often.

2 Ways Babies Sleep

Babies go through periods of light and deep sleep. Both types of sleep are important for your baby's health.

LIGHT SLEEP

Babies need light sleep for their brains to grow and develop.

During Light Sleep Babies:

- Move around and make noises
- Have eye twitches or open and close their eyes quickly
- Have fast and slow breathing
- Dream
- Wake up easily

DEEP SLEEP

Babies need deep sleep for their brains to rest.

During Deep Sleep Babies:

- Don't move very much
- Have relaxed and floppy arms and legs
- Have regular steady breathing
- Make sucking movements
- Don't wake up easily

If your baby wakes up easily when you lay him down, wait for signs of deep sleep first. Then lay him down. Circle all of the following that are signs of **deep sleep**:

- Don't move very much
- Regular steady breathing
- Eyes open and close quickly
- Arms and legs are relaxed
- May move around and make noises

ACTIVITY 2

Why Do Babies Wake Up at Night?

When your baby wakes up at night, it is his way of telling you "I need you". Look at the pictures below and match **REASON FOR WAKING UP** with **WHAT YOU COULD DO.**

REASON FOR WAKING UP	WHAT YOU COULD DO
A I'm too hot or too cold	☐ Feed your baby. Remember, your baby's stomach is about the size of his fist. It's normal for newborns to eat 10-12 times in a 24 hour period.
B I'm sick	☐ Check to see if your baby is sweating and remove a layer of clothing if needed. If your baby is too cold, dress him in warmer clothing.
C I'm hungry	☐ Babies sometimes wake up because they don't feel well. Call your doctor if you are concerned.

These are just a few reasons babies wake up. Night waking is important to keep your baby safe and healthy. Doctors recommend that babies should be put on their backs to sleep.

What questions do you have about why newborns wake up at night?

_____

_____

ACTIVITY 3

How Will You Know When Your Baby is Hungry?

Newborns need to be fed often because their stomachs are very small.

When your baby is hungry, he may:

- ☐ Keep his hands near his mouth or suck on his fist
- ☐ Bend his arms and legs in toward the middle of his body
- ☐ Make sucking noises
- ☐ Pucker his lips
- ☐ Search for the nipple (root)

1. Check (√) the cues listed above that you have seen before.
2. Circle any of the cues above that you have questions about.

If you look for these hunger cues, you can respond to them before your baby starts to cry. It will be much easier to feed your baby when he is calm!

ACTIVITY 4

Steps to Help Calm Your Crying Baby

Babies use crying as a way to communicate that they need your help. When your baby cries:

1 Try to Figure Out the Reason for Crying

For example, she may be:

- In need of a diaper change
- Too hot or too cold
- Overwhelmed
- Uncomfortable
- Hungry
- Tired

2 Hold Your Baby Close to You

3 Repeat the Same Action Over and Over

You might try one of the following:

- Speaking softly or singing
- Gently rocking, swaying or bouncing your baby
- Gently massaging her back, arms, and legs

Circle one of the suggestions to the left that you might use to calm your crying baby.

Remember to be patient. Calming your baby takes time. If your baby continues to cry or becomes more upset, try one of the other suggestions listed above.

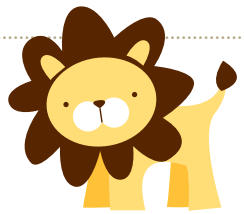
As you get to know your baby, you will begin to recognize what he or she is trying to tell you. Remember, learning how your baby communicates with you takes time. As babies get older, they will cry less and be easier to understand.

What information do you want to remember when your baby arrives?

_____

_____

Ask your WIC counselor for a booklet or DVD about Baby Behavior.



Thank you! We look forward to seeing you at your next visit.

CDPH

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For Baby Behavior research references go to: www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/wicworks/Pages/WICCaliforniaBabyBehaviorCampaign.aspx