

(3) the time of day when crying occurs; (4) the relationship of crying to feeding time; (5) the presence of specific family members during crying and habits of family members, such as smoking; (6) activity of the mother or usual caregiver before, during, and after crying; (7) characteristics of the cry (duration, intensity); (8) measures used to relieve crying and their effectiveness; and (9) the infant's stooling, voiding, and sleeping patterns. Of special emphasis is a careful assessment of the feeding process via demonstration by the parent.

Nursing Alert

If cow's milk sensitivity is suspected, breastfeeding mothers should follow a milk-free diet for a minimum of 3 to 5 days in an attempt to reduce the infant's symptoms. Caution mothers that some nondairy creamers may contain calcium caseinate, a cow's milk protein. If a milk-free diet is helpful, lactating mothers may need calcium supplements to meet the body's requirement. Bottle-fed infants may improve with the same dietary modifications as for infants with CMA.

One important nursing intervention (before or after an organic cause has been eliminated) is reassuring both parents that they are not doing anything wrong and that the infant is not experiencing any physical or emotional harm. Parents, especially mothers, become easily frustrated with their infant's crying and perceive this as a sign that something is horribly wrong. Additionally, colicky infants may be at increased risk for being shaken by their caregivers and experiencing traumatic brain injury. A survey of fathers of colicky infants revealed that professional assistance was limited. The fathers described the experience of having a colicky infant as similar to falling into an abyss from which they had to climb with the assistance of family and friends, thus reinforcing the importance of empathetic nurses ([Ellett, Appleton, and Sloan, 2009](#)). An empathetic, gentle, and reassuring attitude, in addition to suggestions for treatment, will help allay parents' anxieties, which are usually exacerbated by loss of sleep and preoccupation over the infant's welfare. Colic disappears spontaneously, usually by 3 to 4 months old, although guarantees should never be given, because it may continue for much longer.