

Eyes wide open and bright Responds to environment by active body movement and staring at close-range objects Minimal body activity Regular breathing Focuses attention on stimuli	Satisfy infant's needs such as hunger or nonnutritive sucking. Place infant in area of home where activity is continuous. Place a toy in crib or play yard. Place objects within 17.5 to 20 cm (7 to 8 inches) of infant's view. Intervene to console.
Active Alert	
May begin with whimpering and slight body movement Eyes open Irregular breathing	Remove intense internal or external stimuli because infant has increased sensitivity to stimuli.
Crying	
Progresses to strong, angry crying and uncoordinated thrashing of extremities Eyes open or tightly closed Grimaces Irregular breathing	Comforting measures that were effective during alert state are usually ineffective. Rock and swaddle to decrease crying. Intervene to reduce fatigue, hunger, or discomfort.

Portions adapted from Blackburn S, Loper DL: *Maternal, fetal, and neonatal physiology: a clinical perspective*, Philadelphia, 1992, Saunders.

Recognition and knowledge of sleep–wake states is important in the planning of nursing care. It is also important for nurses to help parents and caregivers understand the significance of the infant's behavioral responses to daily caregiving and how these states can be altered. A classic example is a newborn who feeds vigorously in the active alert state but poorly when he or she progresses to the crying state. The neurologic assessment of a newborn in the active alert state will differ significantly from that performed during the deep sleep state.

Newborns typically spend as much as 16 to 18 hours sleeping and do not necessarily follow a pattern of light–dark diurnal rhythm. With increasing age, sleep–wake states change, with increasing amounts of time spent in awake alert states and decreasing amounts of sleep time. Approximately 50% of total sleep time is spent in irregular or rapid eye movement sleep.

Cry

Newborns should begin extrauterine life with a strong, lusty cry. The duration of crying is as variable in each infant as the duration of sleep patterns. Newborns may cry as little as 5 minutes or as much as 2 hours or more per day. Feeding usually terminates the state of crying when hunger is the cause. Holding the infant skin-to-skin, swaddling or wrapping an infant snugly in a blanket (while ensuring the hands remain free to allow for self-calming and avoid