



Getting Your Baby to Sleep

Babies do not have regular sleep cycles until about 4 months of age. Although newborns sleep about 16 to 17 hours per day, they may only sleep 1 or 2 hours at a time. As babies get older, they need less sleep ([/English/ages-stages/baby/sleep/Pages/default.aspx](#)). However, different babies have different sleep needs.

Here are some tips that may help your baby (and you) sleep better at night.

All babies

- **Stay calm & quiet at night.** Try not to stimulate or wake babies when you feed or change them during the night. If you speak, speak softly.
- **Make daytime playtime.** Keep babies awake longer during the day. This helps babies sleep for longer periods during the night. Spend time talking, reading, and playing together.



Babies 4 months and older

Put babies to bed when they are drowsy. Do not wait until babies are asleep. This helps babies learn to fall asleep on their own, in their own bed. If you hold babies or rock them to sleep, they may struggle to go back to sleep if they wake up during the night. Remember to place babies on their back to sleep for every sleep until they are 1 year of age. Visit www.HealthyChildren.org/safesleep ([/safesleep](#)) to learn more about how to create a safe sleeping environment for babies.

Do not rush in to soothe a crying baby. Babies need time to put themselves back to sleep, and they need to learn how to fall back asleep ([/English/ages-stages/baby/crying-colic/Pages/Self-Soothing-Helping-Your-Baby-Learn-This-Life-Skill.aspx](#)) on their own. It is normal for a 6-month-old to wake up during the night and then go back to sleep after a few minutes. Of course, you can attend to them—like feeding them, changing a soiled diaper, or comforting them if they are sick—if needed.

Dr. Jennifer Shu with the American Academy of Pediatrics offers tips on getting baby to go to sleep



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