

# It is More Important to Stay Calm Than to Stop The Crying

Remember, you may be doing your best but your baby may not be able to stop crying.

Coping with a crying baby can leave you feeling tired, alone, that your efforts are not good enough and that the crying will never end. You may even feel angry with your baby. Frustration when dealing with a crying baby is the number one reason for shaking a baby.

Babies have weak neck muscles and heavy heads. Even a few seconds of shaking can cause serious damage. **Shaking may cause a baby to be blind, unable to walk, to have learning problems, and in about one-third of the cases, shaking may cause death.**

**Never shake a baby for any reason. Take a break, don't shake.**

If your baby is crying and you are beginning to feel frustrated, place your baby in a safe place and take a 15-minute break.

## NEVER shake a baby



## It's OK to Ask For Help



Sometimes, no matter what you do, your baby may continue to cry. Plan ahead and have the phone numbers of people that can help when the crying is too much:

- a neighbour, relative or friend who can come over right away and help
- your doctor, your public health nurse

**For help ANYTIME day or night:**

Call Health Link Alberta to get health advice from a nurse:

In Calgary at **(403) 943-LINK (5465)**

In Edmonton at **(780) 408-LINK (5465)**

Or call toll-free in Alberta at **1-866-408-LINK (5465)**

### People to Call When I Need Help:

NAME

PHONE NUMBER

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### Know you can trust your baby's caregiver

Crying can be frustrating for the people who look after your baby. Make sure you tell them:

- All babies cry.
- Tips for soothing your baby.
- It is never OK to shake a baby.
- Who to call when the crying is too much.

[www.cryingbaby.ca](http://www.cryingbaby.ca)



# When your BABY can't stop CRYING



# All Babies Cry

The first few weeks and months after a new baby is born can be a time of excitement and joy, as well as anxiety. New parents can be surprised by how much their baby cries.

**Babies cry for many reasons.** For example, babies cry because they are hungry, need a diaper change, need to be cuddled, don't feel well or need to release tension. It is normal for a baby's crying to increase at about 2 weeks of age. The crying will gradually peak around 2 months and then start to decrease at 3 to 4 months of age. During this stage, **all** babies will have times when they can't stop crying no matter what you do to try to soothe them.



When your baby cries it does not mean that your baby is being bad or that he is angry with you. It also does not mean that you are a bad parent. Not being able to stop a baby from crying can leave parents and caregivers feeling frustrated or even angry.

Your baby's crying can be very upsetting. It is important for you to plan ahead so you are ready for the times when the crying becomes too much.

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# What You Can Do to Soothe Your Baby

## Make your baby as comfortable as possible

Snuggle your baby close to your chest; your heartbeat may comfort the baby. Breastfeeding moms may offer the breast. Use a favourite blanket or soft toy while cuddling him. Make sure he is not too hot or too cold. Check his diaper; keep your baby clean and dry. Offer a soother or teething ring. Give your baby a gentle back rub. If you think your baby is sick get some medical help.



## Provide gentle motion

Walk or rock with your baby. Use a baby swing if you have one. Take her for a walk in a stroller. Carry your baby in a sling or front carrier. Some babies like to go for a car ride; be sure she is safely secured in an infant car seat.

## Provide some soft music or other relaxing sounds

You can try humming or singing a lullaby. The sound of the vacuum cleaner, clothes dryer, or dishwasher sometimes calms a baby.



## Feed your baby slowly and burp her often

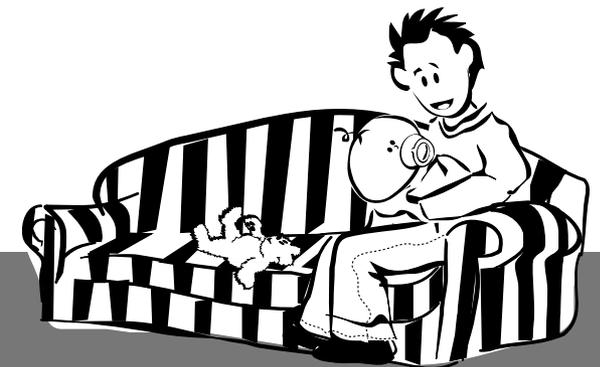
Gas in your baby's tummy can be painful. Burping your baby often may help. If you think that your baby's crying may be linked to her feedings, talk to your doctor or public health nurse.

## Keep yourself calm - take a break

Before your emotions get out of control, place your baby in a safe place like the crib, leave the room and shut the door. Take a 15-minute break to give yourself a chance to relax and calm down before you make another attempt to console your baby. Letting him cry for a few minutes is not harmful.

## Plan ahead with someone you trust

Make a plan to have someone you trust come over immediately if the crying becomes too much to handle. Keep his or her phone number handy for use by you and any other caregiver. Try to arrange for breaks from childcare and get some rest.



Remember, it is more important to stay calm than to stop the crying.