



# Newborn Sleep

## What To Expect & Tips

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# *Congratulations on the arrival of your little one!*

As new parents, you may already be realizing that taking care of a newborn is a lot of work. One of the most important things you can do to help your baby grow and develop properly is to make sure they get enough sleep. In this guide, we'll discuss why sleep is so important for newborns and what you can do to help your baby get the rest they need.

Sleep is crucial for newborns because it is during this time that their bodies and brains are developing rapidly. While your baby is sleeping, their brain is busy making new neural connections that will help them learn and grow.

Getting enough sleep also helps to regulate your baby's hormones and keep their immune system strong.



# Newborn Sleep Patterns

One of the most important things you'll need to know about is your baby's sleep patterns.

Understanding your newborn's sleep-wake cycle, the amount of sleep they need, and the different stages of sleep they experience can help you establish healthy sleep habits for your little one.

## *The sleep-wake cycle of newborns*

The sleep-wake cycle of newborns is quite different from that of adults. Newborns spend most of their time sleeping, and their sleep patterns are not yet fully developed. They typically sleep for periods of two to four hours, waking up frequently to feed, and then falling back asleep.

Newborns also have shorter sleep cycles than adults, typically lasting only 50-60 minutes. During these short sleep cycles, they may enter into active or REM sleep, which is important for their brain development.

However, newborns spend much more time in non-REM sleep than adults, which is necessary for physical growth and repair.

It is common for newborns to have irregular sleep patterns, and they may not develop a consistent sleep-wake cycle until they are several months old.

## *The amount of sleep newborns need*

On average, newborns need about 16-17 hours of sleep per day, although some babies may sleep as little as 11 hours or as much as 19 hours. It's important to remember that every baby is different and there is no set amount of sleep that is right for every baby. You should pay attention to your baby's individual sleep needs and adjust your schedule accordingly.





## *The different stages of sleep in newborns*

Newborns go through different stages of sleep, just like adults do.

The first stage of sleep in newborns is drowsiness. This is when your baby is still awake, but their eyes may be drooping and they may seem sleepy. This is a good time to start getting your baby ready for sleep by creating a calming environment.

The second stage is light sleep. During this stage, your baby may move around a lot, make noises, and even open their eyes. This is a normal part of sleep and is nothing to worry about. However, your baby may be easily awakened during this stage.

The third stage is deep sleep. This is the stage where your baby will be most difficult to wake up.

They may not move around as much and their breathing will become slower and more regular.

Finally, there is REM (rapid eye movement) sleep. This is when your baby may move their eyes rapidly behind their eyelids, and they may twitch, smile or make little noises. This is when your baby is in their deepest sleep and is most difficult to wake up.

During the first few months of life, newborns spend a lot of time in REM sleep. In fact, up to 50% of their sleep time is spent in REM sleep. This is important for your baby's development because it allows their brain to process all the new experiences and information they are taking in during the day.

By understanding the different stages of sleep, you can help ensure that your baby gets the restful sleep they need to grow and develop.

# Creating a Sleep-Friendly Environment

Creating a sleep-friendly environment for your newborn is important for their overall health and well-being. Here are some tips to help you create a comfortable sleep environment for your little one:

## **Temperature and Humidity:**

It's important to keep the temperature and humidity level in your baby's room comfortable. The ideal temperature for a baby's room is between 68-72 degrees Fahrenheit, and the humidity level should be around 50%. You can use a humidifier or dehumidifier to regulate the humidity level in the room.

**Lighting:** Your baby's room should be dimly lit during bedtime to help them relax and prepare for sleep. You can use blackout curtains or shades to block out any excess light that might disrupt your baby's sleep.

A (red) nightlight can also provide a soothing and comforting glow that helps your baby feel secure.

**Noise:** Babies are often soothed by white noise, which can help drown out any sudden sounds that might wake them up. You can use a white noise machine or a simple fan to create a gentle background noise in your baby's room.



**Safe sleep practices:** *It's important to follow safe sleep practices to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Always place your baby on their back to sleep, and use a firm and flat sleep surface, such as a crib or bassinet. Keep the crib free of any soft objects, such as blankets, pillows, or toys, and make sure that the crib meets safety standards.*



# Checklist Safe Sleep Environment

Use this checklist to ensure that your baby's sleep environment is safe and conducive to quality sleep.

1. Choose a Safe Sleeping Space:
  - Ensure that the sleeping space meets the latest safety guidelines (such as no soft bedding, pillows, or stuffed animals).
  - Choose a crib, bassinet, or co-sleeping arrangement that meets safety standards.
  - Place the sleeping space in a safe location away from hazards.
  
2. Control the Temperature:
  - Keep the room temperature between 68-72 degrees Fahrenheit.
  - Dress your baby in appropriate clothing for the temperature.
  - Use a sleep sack or swaddle to help regulate your baby's body temperature.
  
3. Manage Noise Levels:
  - Keep the sleeping area quiet and calm.
  - Use a white noise machine to help drown out external noises.
  - Avoid sudden loud noises or disturbances during sleep time.
  
4. Ensure Proper Lighting:
  - Keep the sleeping area dimly lit during nighttime feedings.  Use blackout curtains or shades to block out light during daytime naps.

*What is something you can improve to ensure that your newborn is in a sleep-friendly environment? Think: black-out curtains, white noise, night light, crib safety, removing crib mobile, bed bumpers, etc.*



## *Establishing Healthy Sleep Habits*

Establishing healthy sleep habits for your newborn is essential for their physical and mental development, and it can also help you get the rest you need. Here are some tips to help you establish healthy sleep habits for your baby:

**Develop a bedtime routine:** Creating a consistent bedtime routine will help signal to your baby that it's time to wind down and get ready for sleep. You can include activities like a bath, reading a story, or singing a lullaby to help your baby relax.

*Remember, every baby is different, so it may take some trial and error to find a routine that works best for your family.*



**Encourage daytime naps:**

Adequate daytime naps can help prevent your baby from getting overtired, which can make it harder for them to fall asleep at night. Try to create a quiet and dark environment for naps, and encourage your baby to take naps at around the same time every day.

**Set up a consistent sleep schedule:**

Establishing a consistent sleep schedule can help regulate your baby's internal clock and make it easier for them to fall asleep at night. Try to create a routine that includes waking up, feeding, playing, napping, and bedtime at around the same time every day.

**Help your baby fall asleep:**

As your baby gets older, they will learn to fall asleep on their own. However, in the early months, they may need some help. You can try swaddling, rocking, or singing to help your baby fall asleep. Just be sure to put them down to sleep while they're still awake, so they can learn to fall asleep on their own.





## *Create Your Baby's Bedtime Routine*

- Choose a consistent bedtime for your baby. This will help establish a routine and signal to your baby that it's time for sleep.
- Decide on the length of your bedtime routine. A routine that is too short may not give your baby enough time to wind down, while a routine that is too long may become overwhelming.
- Make a list of soothing activities that you can incorporate into your bedtime routine. This could include a warm bath, a massage, a lullaby, or reading a book.
- Decide on the order of your activities. It can be helpful to put the most stimulating activities at the beginning of the routine, and the most soothing activities at the end.
- Gather any supplies you need for your routine, such as a baby bathtub, lotion, or books.
- Try out your bedtime routine with your baby, and adjust as needed. It may take some trial and error to find the activities and order that work best for your baby.
- Stick to your routine as much as possible. Consistency is key when it comes to establishing a bedtime routine.

*Notes:*

# Newborn Sleepy Cues

Understanding and responding to sleepy cues in newborns is a valuable skill for you as a parent. Let's take a look at the 5 most common sleep cues for newborns.

## 1. Yawning and Eye rubbing

One of the most recognizable sleepy cues in newborns is yawning. Just like adults, babies yawn when they start feeling tired. Additionally, they may rub their eyes, signaling that their little eyelids are getting heavy. These cues are gentle reminders that it's time to create a peaceful sleep environment.

## 2. Decreased Activity and Quieter Behavior

As sleepiness sets in, you may notice a decrease in your baby's activity level. They may become less engaged in their surroundings and exhibit calmer behavior. Their movements might become slower and more relaxed, indicating that they are preparing for sleep.

## 3. Fussiness and Crying

Although it may seem counterintuitive, increased fussiness and crying can actually be signs of sleepiness in newborns. When babies become overtired, they often become irritable and have difficulty settling down. By recognizing these cues early on, you can help your baby transition to sleep before they become overly exhausted.

## 4. Glazed or Distant Look

Another sleepy cue to watch for is a glazed or distant look in your baby's eyes. They may appear less focused and have a dreamy gaze, suggesting that their attention is drifting away as they become more drowsy.

## 5. Nestling or Seeking Comfort

Newborns often seek comfort and security when they're tired. You might notice them snuggling against your chest, seeking closeness, or looking for their pacifier. These actions indicate that they're in need of soothing and are preparing for sleep.





## *Sleep Associations*

Sleep associations are like the tricks or habits that babies get used to when it's time to doze off. It could be things like rocking them, nursing, or even just being held until they're super drowsy. At first, these things might seem like they work like magic, but the problem is that babies can become dependent on them. That means they have a hard time soothing themselves and falling asleep on their own.

So, it's important to break these associations to help babies develop healthy sleep habits and learn how to soothe themselves.

## *Eat - Play - Sleep*

*Aim to separate feeding from sleep as much as possible. Feed your baby when they are awake and alert, ensuring they are adequately nourished before nap or bedtime. This way, they can learn to associate sleep with relaxation rather than relying on feeding to doze off.*



# Common Sleep Challenges

As a new parent, you're likely to face several common sleep challenges with your newborn. Here are some of the most common sleep issues you may encounter and some tips on how to address them.

**Night waking:** Your baby will wake up frequently throughout the night in the first few months of life. It's important to respond to their needs promptly, whether it's for a feeding, diaper change, or comfort.

Try to establish a consistent bedtime routine and create a calm sleep environment.

**Refusing to sleep:** Some babies resist sleep, which can be frustrating for parents. Try swaddling your baby, offering a pacifier, or rocking them gently to sleep. Also, ensure they're not hungry or in need of a diaper change.



*While it may be tempting to try to keep your baby awake during the day in the hopes that they will sleep longer at night, this can actually backfire and make it harder for your baby to fall asleep when they need to.*

*Instead, try to establish a consistent sleep routine for your baby, with regular naps during the day and a set bedtime at night.*

**Sleep regression:** At around 4 months, your baby may experience a sleep regression, where they start waking up more frequently and have difficulty settling back down. This is a normal stage of development and can last a few weeks. Stick to your routine, provide comfort, and give your baby time to adjust.

**Colic and other medical issues:** If your baby is crying excessively and inconsolably, it could be a sign of colic or other medical issues. Consult with your pediatrician to rule out any underlying conditions. Never hesitate to seek help if in doubt.



## Tips for Parents

It's important to prioritize self-care to ensure you are able to give your baby the best care possible.

First and foremost, make sure you are getting enough rest. It may be tempting to use every moment your baby is sleeping to catch up on chores or work, but your own sleep is crucial.

**Take naps whenever possible**, and ask your partner or family members for help with household tasks.

Coping with sleep deprivation can be challenging, but there are ways to make it easier. Try to establish a consistent sleep routine for your baby, and make sure your sleep environment is comfortable and conducive to rest. **Avoid caffeine and screen time before bed**, and consider using white noise or other calming techniques to help you fall asleep.

Partner and family support is also important during this time. **Don't be afraid to ask for help** with tasks like diaper changes or feeding, and take advantage of any offers of assistance from loved ones. Remember, you don't have to do everything on your own.

Finally, if you are feeling overwhelmed or struggling to cope, don't hesitate to seek professional help. Your healthcare provider can offer guidance and resources, and there are support groups and counseling services available for new parents.



Remember, taking care of yourself is essential to taking care of your baby. By prioritizing self-care, and seeking support, when needed, you can navigate the challenges of parenthood with confidence and resilience.



# Self-Care Worksheet for Parents

Use this self-care worksheet to identify areas of your life that need attention and to make a plan for self-care.

## *Physical Self-Care*

*Are you eating a balanced diet that provides you with the energy and nutrients you need? Are you getting enough sleep? What can you do to improve the quality and quantity of your sleep?*

## *Emotional Self-Care*

*Who are the people in your life that you can turn to for support and connection? How can you be kind and understanding to yourself during challenging moments?*

## *Mental Self-Care*

*How can you balance the demands of parenthood with other responsibilities or interests? What techniques or strategies can you use to manage stress and maintain a positive outlook?*

## *Spiritual Self-Care*

*What practices can you incorporate to reflect on your values and beliefs? What are you thankful for, and how can you cultivate a sense of gratitude in your life?*

## *Final Thoughts*

Getting enough sleep is essential for your newborn's growth and development. By creating a safe sleep environment, establishing a consistent sleep routine, and paying attention to your baby's sleep cues, you can help ensure that your little one gets the rest they need to thrive.

And while getting enough sleep as a new parent can be a challenge, remember that it's important to take care of yourself too – getting enough rest will help you be the best parent you can be.

Thank you for downloading and reading this ebook about newborn sleep. We hope that the information provided has been helpful in creating a sleep-friendly environment for your little one.

Remember that every baby is unique and may have different sleep needs and patterns. Be patient and flexible as you navigate this exciting but sometimes challenging time.

Don't hesitate to reach out to your healthcare provider or a sleep specialist if you have any concerns or questions. Here's to a restful night's sleep for both you and your baby!





## Product Recommendations



### *SNOO Smart Sleeper*

Created by Dr. Harvey Karp, SNOO is a responsive bassinet that adds sleep by responding to a baby's cries with white noise and motion to soothe fussing.

[Click here for the website](#)



### *Happiest Baby Sleepea Swaddle*

The Sleepea Swaddle—the 5-second swaddle—is a safe, easy and comfortable swaddle designed by Dr. Harvey Karp of Happiest Baby on the Block.

[Click here for the website](#)



### *Woombie Air Swaddle*

This 22-award winning baby swaddle mimics the feeling and security of the womb. Voted best baby swaddle. browse our collection.

[Click here for the website](#)



### *Nanit Pro Smart Baby Monitor*

Meet the world's smartest baby camera with crystal-clear 1080p HD video. Monitor your baby's sleep & breathing with real-time analytics in the Nanit app.

[Click here for the website](#)



For now and in  
the future...

## Baby & Toddler Sleep Chart

<i>Age</i>	<i>Wake Windows (hours)</i>	<i>Total Sleep Goal (hours)</i>	<i>Number of Naps</i>	<i>Min-Max Nap Time</i>
< 1 month	0.5 - 1	16 - 20	4	25min - 3 hours
1-2 months	0.75 - 1	16 - 18	4 - 3	30min - 2.5 hours
2-3 months	1 - 1.5	15.5 - 18	4 - 3	45min - 2 hours
4-5 months	1.75 - 2	15 - 15.5	4 - 3	30min - 2.5 hours
6-7 months	2.25 - 2.75	14 - 14.5	3 - 2	45min - 2 hours
8-9 months	2.75 - 3	14 - 14.5	3 - 2	45min - 2 hours
10-11 months	3 - 4	14 - 14.5	2	45min - 2 hours
12-13 months	3 - 6.5	14	2	45 min - 2 hours
14-15 months	3 - 6.5	13.5 - 13.75	2 - 1	45 min - 2.5 hours
16-24 months	4.5 - 6.5	12 - 13.5	2 - 1	45 min - 2.5 hours