



# Newborn Sleep Guide

*Sleep Help for Expectant Parents  
&  
Parents of Babies:  
Newborns to 4 Months of Age*

BY KATIE SHELL  
OF  
BABY SLEEP WELL

# Dedication

*This book is  
lovingly dedicated  
to:*

*Sharyn Timerman*

*who has touched my life*

*in more ways than I could even count.*

*You are very dear to me and I cherish your passion and  
love of children.*

*You continue to bless me as a mentor  
and most importantly  
through your friendship!*

*And*

*to Sharyn's beautiful daughter,*

*Stephanie,*

*who is a new and amazing mommy!*

**BABY SLEEP WELL**

# Introduction

Congratulations on the birth of your new baby!

This is the most exciting and wonderful experience of your life!

You are blessed with this new baby and he/she is even more blessed to have you as a mommy! Above all else, your baby needs YOU, your love, and attention more than anything else right now, and so it is very important to hold, feed, and just be with your baby as often as you can do so. Take care of yourself as well. You need to eat well and feel well both physically and emotionally. It is SUPER important that you are getting a lot of great sleep during this time. Remember that "if mom isn't happy and rested, then chances are, baby will also struggle to be happy and well-rested too". You have been equipped with the gift of "mother's instinct," and you know your baby better than anyone else in this world. You must have supportive people (that understand this) surrounding you at all times. DO NOT let others cast judgement upon you for doing things the way that YOU feel is best for you and your baby.

This book is meant to be a guide for you to better understand your baby and how he/she sleeps. Included are suggestions and tips that will help you navigate through the newborn stages of sleep and what you can do to help improve your baby's sleep in a gradual and gentle manner.

The GREAT news is that you cannot spoil or create any bad habits in the first several months of your baby's life! So you should just take each moment as the joy that it truly can be and do what you feel is right for you and your baby.

I hope that this book will let you feel at ease and help you get the most enjoyment out of the time spent with your newborn baby!

What a blessing!!

# Mother & Newborn

- **Enjoy your newborn** – Your baby needs YOU.
  - For babies younger than 4 months, do not worry about creating bad sleep habits. People will tell you NOT to feed your baby every time they cry or not to rock them fully to sleep or hold them while they sleep. Ignore this "bad advice" and do what you need to do in order to just enjoy your baby. You've been given "mommy instincts" for a reason. Have faith in your abilities. Follow your heart because it is amazing. So are you!
- **Feeding** – Your baby needs to eat often.
  - Minimize hunger issues. Make sure that you are offering feeds frequently during the day. Try cluster feeding before bedtime. Do not try to put your baby on a feeding schedule in order to attempt to stretch their night sleep. The better option is to feed as often as you can during the day so that most of their calories are obtained when they are more awake. If your baby requires a feeding at night always offer it to him/her. As your baby matures he/she should naturally begin giving longer stretches of sleep at night due to their own ability.
- **Bonding** – Your baby loves to be loved.
  - Your focus should be on keeping you and your baby relaxed and spending plenty of time bonding with each other. It's also ok to take a break from your baby when you need it. You can place your baby in a safe place and spend some quiet time alone.
- **Resting** – Your baby needs to rest often.
  - Your baby needs a lot of great sleep and will benefit if you are rested as well. Newborn babies can generally sleep anywhere and will do so often. Some newborns can sleep 20 hours in a 24 hour period. Let them sleep!

BABY SLEEP WELL

# The Fourth Trimester

There's a theory that human babies are born 3 months earlier than they actually should be. Many Mammals have the ability to stand and walk seconds after they are born into this world. It is believed that over time the human brain has become much larger than most other creatures that exist and thus our babies must be born earlier in order for them to fit more easily through the birth canal. Human babies are totally dependant on their mothers for holding, feeding, soothing, and caring for them. And so, this is why the first 3 months of a baby's life have been named "the fourth trimester." In his book *The Happiest Baby on the Block*, Dr. Harvey Karp says this:

*"The key to being a new parent, says renowned pediatrician Dr. Harvey Karp, is to think of your newborn's "fourth trimester."*

*"Our babies aren't like horses. They can't run the first day of life," Karp says. "And so we need to recognize that they're evicted from the womb three months before they're ready for the world."*

He proceeds to advise parents that the "5 S's" (swaddling, side or stomach position, shushing, swinging, and sucking) are the five actions that will **re-create the atmosphere in the womb** — during the "fourth trimester."

<http://www.npr.org/2012/06/24/155426534/dr-karp-on-parenting-and-the-science-of-sleep>



# Early Sleep Disruption

There are many factors to consider when trying to understand your newborn's sleep. It's often said that the only thing predictable about a newborn baby is *unpredictability*. This can definitely be true for sleep. Some of the major reasons why sleep can change so often (even from day to day) for newborns might be because of the following factors:

- **Day/Night confusion** – your baby's biological clock or circadian rhythm has not developed yet.
  - Correct this occurrence by waking your baby after 2 hours of sleep (during the day)
  - Safely expose your baby to sunlight during periods of wakefulness.
  - Make sure to place your baby in a completely dark room for ALL sleep.
- **Colic** – Colic peaks around 5 to 8 weeks of age and can last up to 5 months.
  - Colicky babies need a lot of soothing. Do what you must (following all safe sleep guidelines given by the American Academy of Pediatrics) to ensure that your baby sleeps.
  - For non-colicky babies, sleep starts to come together after 2 to 3 months (adjusted age). This means that there will be more predictability regarding your baby's sleep, but that does not mean that your baby will be sleeping "by the clock" on a set schedule.
- **The Period of Purple Crying:** – <http://purplecrying.info/>
  - This is the period in a baby's life from age 2-weeks to about 3 or 4 months when a baby cries more often than any other time in his/her life. The baby seems inconsolable and appears to be crying for no apparent reason. It can be very frustrating when we as mothers are unable to console our babies. It is OK to place your baby in a safe place and walk away for some time to catch your breath.

BABY SLEEP WELL

# Early Sleep Disruption

- **Gassiness** – Immature Digestive System & Gi Tract

- A baby's digestive system is very immature and can develop slowly. Babies may have trouble passing gas as well as adjusting to new foods passed through breast milk or formula. These tummy troubles can make sleep very erratic and can cause a baby to have painful crying episodes.

**Breastfed babies** - If a breastfed baby is having painful crying spells and gassiness, it is advised that the lactating mother eliminate certain foods from her diet to help alleviate some of these issues. Until the baby's digestive system is better able to handle some of the foods that are known to cause tummy troubles, it's best to avoid the following:

- \* Dairy (milk, cheese, butter, and yogurt)
- \* Eggs
- \* Fruit/fruit juices - oranges, kiwis, grapefruit, bananas, apples, lemons, limes, and tomatoes
- \* Veggies - onion, cabbage, garlic, cauliflower, broccoli, cucumbers, and peppers
- \* Chocolate
- \* Tea and coffee
- \* Spicy foods
- \* Carbonated drinks (especially coke)
- \* Caffeinated drinks (coffee)
- \* Fatty foods (i.e. french fries)
- \* Soy and gluten might need to be eliminated in some cases

- **Gassiness** – Caused by tongue-tie/lip-tie

- Tongue-ties and/or lip-ties can be the cause of SO much stress and frustration for both mom and baby and can easily be misdiagnosed for other conditions such as, extreme fussiness, colic, acid reflux, and even as severe as a 'failure to thrive' diagnosis.

# Early Sleep Disruption

- **Gassiness** – Caused by tongue-tie/lip-tie (continued)

According to the article "A Step-By-Step Guide To Checking For Tongue/Lip Ties" by Heather Dessinger of the website Mommypotamus.com, the following can be common symptoms of tongue/lip ties:

## Baby's symptoms

- \* Difficulty latching on or falls off the breast easily
- \* Gumming or chewing the nipple while nursing
- \* Unable to hold a pacifier or bottle in the mouth
- \* Gassy (babies with ties often swallow a lot of air because they cannot maintain suction properly)
- \* Poor weight gain
- \* Excessive drooling
- \* Unable to fully drain breast
- \* Choking on milk or popping off to gasp for air while nursing
- \* Falling asleep during feedings, then waking a short while later to nurse again
- \* Sleep deprivation (due to the need for frequent feedings)
- \* Extended nursing episodes – aka marathon nursing sessions
- \* Clicking noises while sucking
- \* Popping on and off breast often
- \* Biting – Babies who have trouble grasping the nipple sometimes try to use their teeth to hold on. (Once they come in, of course)

<https://www.mommypotamus.com/a-step-by-step-guide-to-diagnosing-tongue-ties/>

*Formula fed babies* - If your baby is formula fed but still having tummy issues or is spitting up often, it would be a good idea to consult with your Pediatrician or feeding specialist to find a formula that is easier on your baby's tummy.

# Early Sleep Disruption

**GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease)** – Acid /Silent Reflux

- **Reflux** is caused by the backup of food from a baby's stomach into the throat. When a baby spits up, even a little bit, acidity in that spit-up can cause irritation in the esophagus and can really begin to irritate the baby's throat and mouth. It is best to consult with a GI Care Specialist. A specialist will save you a lot of stress and worry and help you get to the bottom of what is truly happening with your baby and his/her tummy issues.

- **Silent reflux** occurs when the food that would normally be spit up only goes into the esophagus and gets swallowed back down. This then causes the same pain as normal GERD. Silent reflux can be very difficult to detect. The most common symptoms are irritability, crying, arching, and sometimes a coughing choking sound. Silent reflux should also be discussed by a specialist to eliminate the pain that can be associated with it.

## Remedies to help your baby with reflux

- There are a few measures you can take to help ensure that your baby is no longer suffering from reflux and thus not having any pain that is normally associated with reflux.

\* Medication: The proper medication can help alleviate the pain that can be associated with reflux.

\* Angled crib mattress: While this may seem like a good solution, the American Academy of Pediatrics warns against it and suggests a flat and firm crib mattress for safety reasons. We have found that angling one end of the crib mattress is ineffective for helping a baby with reflux.

# Early Sleep Disruption

- GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease) – Acid Reflux remedies (continued)
  - \* Holding your baby upright after each feeding: Holding your baby upright for 5 minutes + is a great way to help any air bubbles settle and keep gas or acid from coming up toward his/her throat. (see "Crib Sway" technique below)
  - \* Probiotics: It is also strongly suggested to use a probiotic daily. Probiotics are live, beneficial bacteria that are naturally found in the digestive system. A probiotic supplement keeps these bacteria balanced and creates a healthy digestive tract. Having a healthy digestive system can ease a baby's tummy aches and will in turn lessen their crying and allow them to sleep more peacefully.
  - \* Colic Calm: This is a homeopathic remedy that is very effective in helping regulate acid in the stomach. Made up of FDA-Registered medicines, it contains active carbon to help neutralize the PH in the gut. It is safe, gentle, and all natural. It also contains Melissa Officinalis (Lemon Balm). Lemon balm is used for digestive problems, including upset stomach, bloating, and gas. Lemon balm also has calming effects and can help with anxiety, sleep problems, and restlessness. <http://www.coliccalm.com/>
- **The Wonder Weeks:** – Developmental Leaps
  - The Wonder Weeks is the theory that all babies go through 10 developmental leaps in the first 20 months of their lives. These leaps can cause clinginess, fussiness, and will undoubtedly disrupt your baby's sleep. There is a book and now even an app that can help parents understand when and why each leap or "wonder week" will approximately take place and how to navigate through them more easily. It's a good idea to have this guide ready and to be prepared beforehand.

# General Sleep Information

In the beginning, your newborn's sleep will have no definitive pattern. Naps can generally be short and unpredictable and may happen often until about 3 to 4 months of age. The following can help you understand how things might begin to unfold as your baby grows and matures in his/her sleep:

- **Defined Sleep Patterns** – Starting as early as one month of age
  - As the weeks pass by, your newborn's sleep will begin to show a little more of a pattern but can still shift slightly from one day to the next.
  - Night sleep begins to organize leading to one longer period of consolidated sleep that can last up to 4 to 6 hours. You can still expect at least 3 night feedings in a 12-hour period.
  - Morning wake time becomes more consistent. (Your baby will wake up around the same time each day within a 15 to 30-minute window).
  - Bedtime will begin to regulate and may happen around the same time each night.
  - Day sleep often takes much longer to organize but you may begin to see a more regular morning nap emerge (lasting anywhere from 1 to 2 hours in length). The second nap can be more difficult to achieve. Your goal is to find your baby's nap "sweet spot", or the time that your baby falls asleep most easily and quickly (on his/her own with little to no crying within 15 minutes or less).

# Optimizing Sleep

Your newborn baby needs a lot of sleep so don't be alarmed if he/she doesn't spend a lot of time awake. Newborn babies can sleep as much as 20 hours in a 24 hour period. You can focus your time on the following:

- **Sleep on a loose schedule** – Your baby should not be on a rigid schedule at this time.

- Don't force a schedule but try a loose routine. Feed your baby every time he/she wakes up, have some 'activity' time, then more sleep time. EAT, (lite) PLAY, SLEEP!

- **Swaddling** – Your baby likes to feel safe and secure.

- The use of a swaddle will help recreate a womb-like feeling for your baby.

Note: many babies dislike the process of swaddling, but once they are swaddled up tight, they sleep exponentially better. Experiment with different types of swaddles that are approved and deemed safe. Swaddles should be eliminated as soon as your baby begins to roll over (approximately 4 months of age). Our favorite swaddle in the Love to Dream 50/50 transition swaddle.

<https://lovetodream.com/swaddle-up-50-50/>



# E.A.S.Y. Routine

The E.A.S.Y system (created by Tracy Hogg) is one that allows babies to have a flexible yet consistent daily routine. Babies thrive on routines and repetitiveness each day. The E.A.S.Y system will allow mom's to have some quiet time while baby is napping. Because mom is part of the acronym, we feel that this is a good reminder to parents that in order to have a happy well-rested baby, mom must also be well rested herself. Here is what the easy system looks like:

## *E is for Eating*

The first and most important item on the list is food. Feed your baby upon waking from all sleep (naps, through the night, and first thing in the morning when your baby wakes for the day). In the beginning, your newborn will eat 6 times or more each day. It is NOT a good idea to try to stretch your baby's feedings in attempts to help stretch their night sleep. The truth is, the more calories your baby gets during the day the less likely he/she will need to eat during the middle of the night. Feed feed feed!

## *A is for Activity*

After your baby finishes eating you will want to engage him in some form of activity. Activity for a newborn will be simple: light "play". This can be smiling at him, letting him look at a toy, singing to him, or just walking him around the room. For babies over two months, you can begin tummy time, or playing under a play mat. You will want to make sure not to overdo "playtime" as you could over stimulate your baby and make it harder for him to fall asleep at naptime/bedtime.

# E.A.S.Y. Routine

## *S is for Sleep*

Sleep is SO important for our babies especially during the early months of their lives.

Food is for the body what sleep is for the brain (Marc Weissbluth); sleep is brain food, and it's essential for babies to have solidified sleep for optimal brain growth and function. We never want to deprive a baby of sleep during the day in order to attempt to get them to sleep better at night. We also want to keep a flexible schedule and avoid a rigid "by-the-clock" schedule. Sleeping well during the day will help a baby sleep better at night.

For newborns, naps can be as short as 30 minutes and can last as long as 2 to 3 hours before they need a feeding again. As they get older, babies will naturally begin sleeping longer stretches at night (sometimes up to 6 hours). We do not want to attempt any sleep shaping measures at this point in a baby's life. When a baby this young cries it is because there is a true need that must be met. It is our job to figure out what our babies need and provide it to them.

## *Y is for "Your" Time*

A newborn can take a lot out of new parents. There are SO many emotions and so many thoughts racing through your head all at once. If you are not well rested your stress and sleeplessness will be reflected on your baby and he/she will feel the weight of the world that is on your shoulders on his/hers too. You MUST take time to relax, eat a good meal, and just be at peace. Sleep if you can and make sure to take a relaxing bath. This time should NOT be a time to hurry and get chores around the house done. You need a break and time to recharge too, Mama!

# Minimize Overtiredness

Sleep needs vary by baby, but these guidelines are a great starting point for most babies. Babies rarely need less sleep than this:

- **Newborn and less than 2 months of age** – Super short wake windows

Babies 2 months and younger should not be awake longer than 45-60 minutes, should have 4 or more naps per day, and require 16-20 hours of sleep each and every day (24 hour period).

Waking from any nap that's running longer than 2 hours helps to avoid day/night confusion.

- **3 months old** – Wake windows might lengthen slightly.

Babies at 3 months of age should not be awake longer than 1.5 hours in between sleep times, need 4 naps per day, and require 15.5-18 hours of sleep each day (24 hour period). Continue to wake from any nap that is longer than 2 hours.

- **4 months old** – Wake windows increase even more.

- Babies at 4 months of age should not be awake longer than 1.75-2 hours in between sleep times, need 3-4 naps per day, and require 15.5 hours of sleep each day (24 hour period). Again, wake from any nap that is longer than 2 hours.

- Watch for “true” sleepy cues such as yawning, staring, quieting, and ear rubbing to decide when your baby should be going down for naps. Do not wait to get him/her to a nap until he/she is showing overtired signs such as fussiness, crankiness, yawning repeatedly, and reddening around the baby's eyelids/eyebrows. Waiting until the baby is showing these signs generally means that we have missed the perfect nap-time window of opportunity, and it might be more difficult for your baby to relax and fall asleep.

# Minimize Overtiredness

- **4 months old** – (continued)

- Begin bedtime earlier [between 6pm and 8pm] by 4-5 months of age (approximately). When the 4th nap is dropped, the bedtime will naturally be earlier, generally around 6:00/6:30pm or so.

- Bedtime should still be flexible based on the quality and length of day sleep.

- Using an early bedtime can help avoid the 'witching hour' that can occur around 6 weeks of age. If your baby is already asleep for the night BEFORE the 'witching hour', you won't have to experience the rough patch in your baby's life known as the "4 Month sleep regression!"

*4 Month sleep regression* = the development of the Circadian timing rhythm.



BABY SLEEP WELL

# Sleep Environment

There are several important factors that can be combined to ensure that a baby will receive the healthiest and most restorative sleep possible. One of the most important key elements is providing the baby with a safe place to sleep.

- **Safe sleep space:** – The American Academy of Pediatrics
  - It is super important to follow all sleep safety guidelines as suggested by The AAP.
  - Make sure your baby's sleep space is free of CRIB BUMPERS. NO blankets, pillows, positioners, or stuffed toys should be placed in your baby's crib. <https://www.aap.org>

## **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome** – The Mayo Clinic

"Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is the unexplained death, usually during sleep, of a seemingly healthy baby less than a year old. Although the cause is unknown, it appears that SIDS might be associated with defects in the portion of an infant's brain that controls breathing and arousal from sleep."

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/sudden-infant-death-syndrome>

## **10 Steps to Help Prevent SIDS** – WebMD

- Put a sleeping baby on his/her back
- Use a firm bed, no soft toys or bedding
- Don't smoke around your baby
- Keep your sleeping baby close, but not in your bed
- Consider using a pacifier to put baby to sleep (thumb sucking)
- Breastfeed as long as you can
- Immunize your baby
- Keep your baby from overheating
- Steer clear of products that claim to reduce the risk of SIDS
- Don't give honey to an infant under 1 year old

<https://www.webmd.com/parenting/sids-prevention>

# Sleep Environment

Providing your baby with an environment that is conducive to sleep can help ensure healthy sleep hygiene and habits from the beginning. The suggestions below are meant to help improve sleep for your baby. Your newborn may actually sleep well in many environments at the very early stages of life but as he/she nears closer to 3-4 months of age, sleep often becomes slightly more difficult to accomplish. This just means that your baby is developing a new set of sleep needs and his/her brain is maturing.

- **Consistent sleep space** – Your baby needs his/her own bed.
  - Having a consistent and **personal** sleep space is SO important for these little ones! The sooner you put your baby in his/her crib to sleep, the quicker he/she will learn to love it. We now want your baby sleeping in the same place for all sleep, day and night. This is very important especially during the weeks when you actually begin shaping your baby's sleep.
- **Super dark room:** – Black out curtains may not be enough
  - At 3 to 4 months of age your baby begins to develop onto the Circadian timing rhythm. Their brain begins to produce sleep and wake hormones according to the sun. Having the room super dark at this time can be an essential part of getting your baby to sleep and stay asleep especially during naps. Also, darkness is an excellent cue to prepare your baby's body for rest. A completely pitch black room can mean the difference between a 30-minute nap and a restorative 2-hour nap. (If you can see your hand in front of your face while in the room after your eyes have adjusted, then the room is NOT dark enough.) Attempting to “train” a baby to learn how to sleep in a brightly lit environment is like trying to teach his/her body how to receive full nutritional value out of a bag of potato chips. It's just NOT possible.

\* Tip: Follow the link below to purchase Baby Sleep Well's favorite blackout window product. <http://www.blackoutez.com/128.html>

# Sleep Environment

- **Soothing sounds:** – Constant sounds

- The use of a white noise maker or sound machine for naps and for nighttime is essential for your newborns sleep beginning on the first day of life and even when they are much older (5 years +).

Your sound machine should be kept on for the duration of the sleep period. The sound needs to be constant and non-fluctuating (no ocean waves, heartbeats or whale sounds etc.) It should be loud enough to be heard through a closed door (no louder than 65 decibels to protect your baby's ears).

- The sound machine can be a little miracle-worker and goes the extra mile in taking your baby's sleep from 'so so' to AMAZING.

Here are a few reasons why:

- \* Constant and static sounds help lull a baby to sleep.

- \* White noise is known to reduce stress in babies.

- \* The constant sound will mimic what a baby heard in the womb and can take the place of our 'shushing' a baby to calm them.

- \* The sound of white noise will drown out the outside noises, which occur during the times when babies should be sleeping.

- **Peaceful scents:** – Essential Oils

- As an added bonus to giving your child the ultimate and most relaxing sleep environment possible, I highly recommend the use of an essential oil diffuser. Using calming and peaceful scents before naps and bedtime will relax and prepare your baby for sleep.

- \* Tip: Baby Sleep Well has partnered with an amazing aroma therapist to produce the most peaceful and calming essential oil blend (The Baby Sleep Well Blend). You can find that essential oil blend at the following link:

<https://www.llapothecary.com/online-store/Baby-Sleep-Well-LLC-Ultimate-Baby-Sleep-p56479582>

# Sleep Environment

- **Proper room temperature:** – Cool and comfortable
  - Keeping the temperature in your baby's room between 68-73 degrees will help his/her body produce melatonin, which helps babies sleep. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends these temperatures for SIDS safety and to keep babies from getting overheated.

PLEASE DO NOT use any portable/space heaters to heat your baby's room even if it has an automatic temperature control system. Many of these can easily malfunction and continue to blow hot air into the room. Many babies die each year from Hyperthermia. It's better to use breathable layers on your baby and keep the room temperature cool. This can help regulate your baby's body temperature while he/she sleeps.



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# Falling Asleep Independantly

- **Self-soothing:** – A learned skill

Self settling is a skill that your baby must acquire much like learning to balance and then eventually walk. This does NOT mean he/she must be left alone to scream and cry until falling asleep.

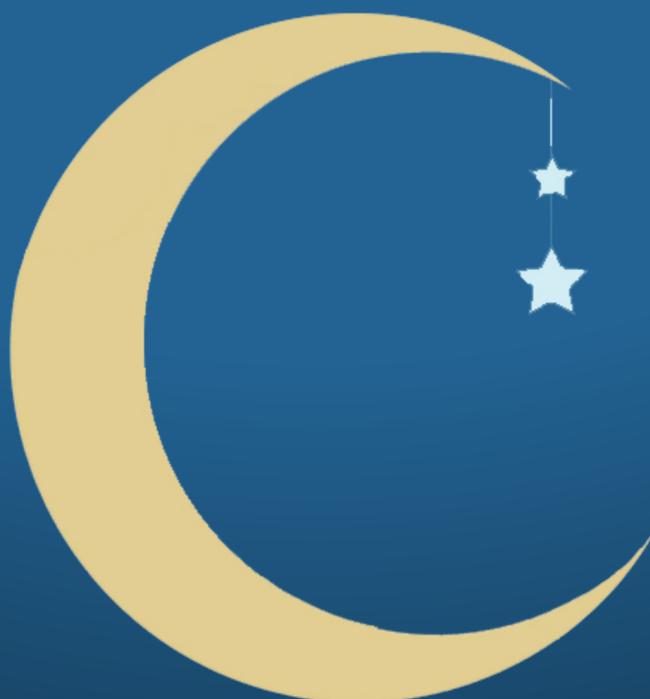
You can gently encourage self soothing by letting your baby practice.

\* By 2 months [or even earlier], start putting your baby down sleepy (drowsy) but awake. Only attempt the 'drowsy but awake' technique for about 10 minutes before using other soothing efforts to help your baby fall asleep, as we don't want him/her to become overtired. Don't stress if it doesn't work right away – keep trying! Babies sleep a lot, which means lots of opportunities to practice this important skill.

\* Give your baby a couple of minutes of alone-time after waking from a short nap, in the middle of the night, or early in the morning. He may surprise you and fall back asleep. At a young age, I would set a maximum of 5 to 10 minutes before intervening.

\* Use a swing to help encourage independent sleep at first or to give you a break when you need some time to yourself.

- Place the swing in your baby's bedroom [or wherever you plan to have the baby sleep].



# Falling Asleep Independantly

- **Self-soothing:** – A learned skill (continued)
  - Keep the room pitch black and use your white noise.
  - Swaddle baby up and place him/her in the swing drowsy but awake and allow the swing to lull him/her to sleep.

Tip: Here at Baby Sleep Well we love the 'My Little Snugapuppy™ Cradle 'n Swing' by Fisher Price. Please remember though that this product is not recommended to use for long periods of sleep as it could pose a risk for your baby's safety. You should still follow all sleep safety guidelines as recommended by the AAP.

Your baby will begin learning to fall asleep due to his/her own ability early! Make sure to keep an eye on your baby often and use a video monitor while your baby is in his/her crib, swing, or the sleeper/bassinet.



# Soothing Sleep Routines

It is so important to have a consistent and soothing routine before bed that communicates to your baby that it is time for sleep. You will want to begin incorporating this soothing routine into your baby's schedule by about 2 months of age. Soothing sleep routines play a huge role in preparing a baby both physically and mentally for sleep. We cannot explain to our babies that it is time for them to sleep and why sleep is so important. Instead, we must use actions and cues that prepare their bodies to more easily relax and enter into sleep. At bedtime, you will want to begin incorporating that routine about 15 to 30 minutes before placing your baby in his/her crib to sleep.

- **Soothing bedtime routine:** – A sample for helping your baby sleep at night

Follow the 3 -“B’s” in the order as they are listed for a good bedtime routine:

- **Bottle/Breast**
- **Bath**
  - < top off feeding/nursing
- **Bed**

You can start by providing your baby a full feeding and then bathing your baby (it is not necessary to bathe your baby with soap every night if you are concerned that it will dry out his/her skin) however, letting him/her have some time in a bath of warm water can help relax the body begin making it easier for melatonin to be produced. Melatonin is the hormone that allows babies and adults fall asleep and remain asleep.



# Soothing Sleep Routines

- **Soothing bedtime routine:** – A sample for helping your baby sleep at night (continued)

You can use essential oils on your baby's feet and give him/her a calming massage, and then put his/her pajamas on. Having the room dimly lit and the sound machine already turned on will also help the body prepare for sleep. If you choose to do so, have your essential oil diffuser on at this time as well. Sing in a soft voice quietly so that your baby begins to relax. Add a top-off nursing/bottle feeding and have him/her drowsy (not fully asleep) and ready for bed.

You may further dim or completely turn off the lights, rock for relaxation, or sing softly while standing by the crib swaying gently back and forth from side to side (it helps to tuck one of your baby's legs comfortably under his/her bottom [like a flamingo stands on one leg] to allow any final burps to easily be released). I call this technique \* "crib sway" (see image below) It seems to really help soothe and relax a baby before being placed in the crib for the night.



Crib sway technique

# Soothing Sleep Routines

Try to get him/her drowsy [very sleepy but not fully asleep]. Once ready, you can place your baby in the crib and pat and shush him/her softly. It is ok to leave even if your baby is not asleep and is fussing or even crying.

Note: If your baby is falling asleep or becomes too sleepy during the routine (for both naps and bedtime), you do not have to continue with the remainder of the routine. You should go ahead and place your baby in his consistent sleep space and let him get the sleep he needs.

A word on books as part of your baby's soothing routine: Books are actually not recommended as part of the soothing routine until about 12 to 15 months of age since books can actually cause a baby to become more stimulated and possibly overtired before sleep.

- **Soothing naptime routine:** – A sample for helping your baby sleep during the day

For naps, you will want to do a shortened version of the bedtime routine minus bathing. Keep that routine to about 5 to 10 minutes and have your tools and aids (dark room, sound machine, and oil diffuser) prepared to get your baby as relaxed and prepared for sleep as possible.



# Sleep by Age Guide

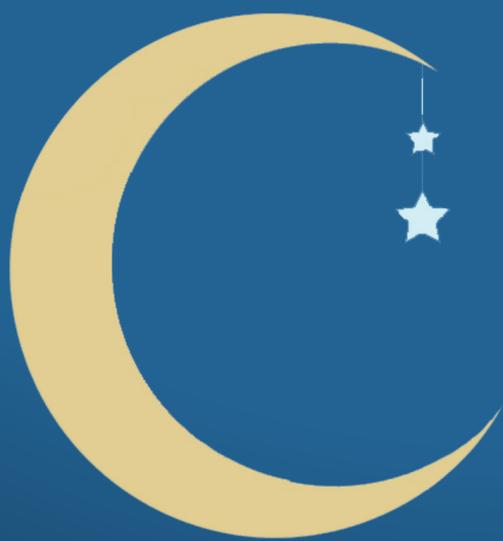
- **Weeks 1 - 4:** – Your baby becomes less portable and more sensitive to stimulation from his/her surroundings.

Put baby to sleep in dark place within 45 minutes to 1-hour of waking (a good rule to adhere to). Do whatever works to maximize sleep and minimize crying while still abiding by the AAP safety guidelines.

Drowsy but awake. Both parents should be involved in soothing and putting baby to sleep.

- **Weeks 4 – 8:** – Peak fussiness and crying may be common

Focus on the 45 minutes to 1-hour rule of wakefulness during the day but plan to deal with increasing fussiness and wakefulness in the evening at 6 weeks. Peak fussiness and wakefulness happens in the evening. Take a few days off of work or get home early in the evening at the age of 6 weeks. Get as much help as you can from family or friends (help does NOT mean unwanted opinions or criticism). Putting baby down drowsy but awake may only work during the day for naps but might not seem to work as well in the evening. Maximize sleep and minimize crying. Do what you can to help settle your baby.



# Sleep by Age Guide

- **Weeks 8 - 12:** – Slowly increase wake periods of wake time.

Begin working toward 1 to 1 hour and 15 minutes of awake periods between naps during the day, and watch for drowsy signs at night. Move bedtime earlier around 6 to 7 PM.

- **Weeks 12 - 14:** – Sleep begins to show more of a pattern.

Begin slowly working toward a regimen of daily naps consisting of four 1-hour+ naps and possibly a fifth catnap each day, and begin establishing a more routine bedtime. Work toward 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes of awake periods between naps during the day.

- **Weeks 15 - 16:** – Establish a true sleep schedule.

Organize and begin setting a schedule for your baby's sleep to include a consistent morning wake time (that is established naturally by your baby [preferably 6:30AM to 7:30AM]) and set naps consisting of a morning nap, second nap, third nap, and possibly a fourth catnap at routine times. Set bedtime early enough so that your baby is not become overtired and "Fighting" sleep or getting fussy and cranky before bed. Work toward 1 hour and 45 minutes to 2 hours of awake periods between naps during the day.

- **Weeks 16 + :** – Ask for guidance and get support.

Reach out to your favorite Pediatric Sleep Specialist if your baby is having any difficulties with the 4-month sleep regression!

[www.babysleepwell.com](http://www.babysleepwell.com)

# What to Expect

- At 16 weeks your baby will be biologically mature enough for you to begin shaping his/her sleep as well as helping in establish strong and healthy sleep habits. He/she will need to be allowed to practice the skill of falling asleep independently. Make sure you come up with a solid plan that you feel you can commit to. Consistency is key! Starting sleep shaping early means you can successfully implement very gentle methods to help baby learn to sleep on his/her own.
  - Teething and developmental milestones may cause disruptions in your baby's sleep. A well-rested baby that can fall back asleep independently will be able to get past these 'bumps in the road' much more easily.
  - Night feedings can persist as long as we allow them to and may not even be necessary. By 4 months of age, your baby will likely be down to 2 night feedings, and down to 1 night feeding by 6 months of age. By 8/9 months you should consider working toward eliminating all night feedings unless otherwise recommended by a pediatrician or lactation consultant.
- Try to wait a minimum of 10 minutes before responding to middle of the night awakenings to give your baby time to re-settle on his own.
- Consult with your Pediatrician before you begin any sleep shaping or cutting out of night feeds.
  - Contact your Pediatric sleep specialist to achieve the maximum success as quickly as possible and to avoid creating any bad sleep habits or sleep associations.

# Important Tips

- Healthy sleep in children helps prevent maternal depression
- Start early with establishing healthy sleep habits
- **Sleep Training** – Does not mean ‘leaving your baby to cry-it-out’. "Sleep Training" is the term Baby Sleep Well uses to define the coaching, supporting, and education of parents in order to give them the tools, knowledge, and full understanding of how to provide their individual baby/child with the healthiest and most restorative sleep possible that will last a lifetime." "Sleep training" is actually for parents not for babies.
- **Sleep Shaping** is the term Baby Sleep Well uses to define the set-up and preparation of several key factors, which will allow a baby/child to easily and readily accept sleep without struggle, stress, or frustration.
- Properly shaping a baby's sleep includes several factors such as, environment, timing of sleep, commitment to your baby's/child's sleep (protecting his sleep schedule), and establishing healthy sleep habits.
- Sleep is food for your baby's brain... Treat your baby's sleep with as much importance as you would treat his feedings
- Overtired infants are less likely to self soothe and are often more dependent on their parents to soothe them to sleep.
- Don't compare what is happening in other families with what is happening or NOT happening in yours with your baby. You don't ALWAYS see the full picture of what is going on in the other family's home.
- Don't wait for sleep problems to resolve on their own. They will only get worse as your baby/child struggles with sleep and accumulates sleep debt from being chronically overtired.

*Thank You!*

Baby Sleep Well is committed to helping you give your baby the BEST, most restorative, and healthy sleep he/she can get.

Support and results in the most peaceful manner is our #1 goal. Don't hesitate to reach out to us for the utmost quality and research-based guidance on sleep for your baby.

Please contact us! We are eager to help you in any way that we can!

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