



PROHEALTHY

Education for our patients and families

Soothing Your Fussy Baby

For centuries, Moms have known that babies calm down when they're held, rocked and shushed. You can help baby to feel more at home in this outside world by using these 5 steps.

1. Swaddling: Snug wrapping is the first step in baby soothing. They are often very active during the wrapping, but tight wrapping helps them to feel safe and secure. As soon as you add the other steps the calming will begin. (Remember to avoid loose blankets around the face as well as overheating.)

2. Side or stomach positioning: The back is the only safe sleeping position, but it makes crying babies fuss even more because they feel like they're falling. To soothe your upset baby, use the side or stomach position, this turns on the calming reflex. Stay with her until she's quiet. When you are ready to lay her down to sleep, roll her onto her back.

3. Shushing: A quiet room may be inviting for a parent at night, but it is too quiet for a baby. When your baby cries, shush as loudly as she's wailing, then gradually lessen the sound as she settles down. When you are out of breath, play a CD of white noise or soothing sounds.

4. Swinging: Babies love rocking, but crying babies need fast, tiny movements, one inch back and forth, like a shiver. Swings, slings and rocking chairs can be used to help keep them calm. Always support your baby's head and never jiggle her too hard or when you're angry or upset.

5: Sucking: This is very calming for babies. Nursing moms should offer the breast for soothing whenever it feels right.

Soothing your infant is like "dancing" with her. Follow your baby's lead by watching for her signals. The intensity of your 5 steps should mirror the intensity of her fusses. And it doesn't have to be just Mom's duty: Dads are great at calming babies too. They're often more comfortable doing the snug swaddling, strong shushing and jiggly swinging. When your baby's crying lessens, gradually reduce the intensity of the 5 steps, and gently put your baby down to sleep.

From the book "The Happiest Baby on the Block" by Dr Harvey Karp

Please call your doctor for any questions or concerns you may have regarding this information.



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*The information in this handout is not meant to replace the advice from your own doctor. Please ask your doctor any questions you may have.
This educational material was developed by a team of experts from throughout ProHealth Care.*

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