Colic

An otherwise healthy baby who cries for at least 3 hours a day for more than 3 days a week is said to have colic. Colic spells range from fussiness to agonizing screams and will usually occur late in the afternoon or in the evening. Between the crying spells, the baby acts fine. Colic usually begins at 2 to 3 weeks of age and can last through 3 to 4 months of age. The cause of colic is unknown.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If you are breastfeeding, do not drink coffee, tea and colas. They contain caffeine.
- Burp your baby after each ounce of formula. If you are breastfeeding, burp your baby every 5 minutes. Always hold your baby while feeding and allow at least 20 minutes for feeding. Keep your baby upright for at least 30 minutes following a feeding.
- Do not feed your baby every time he or she cries. Wait at least 2 hours between feedings.
- Check to see if the baby is in an uncomfortable position, is too hot or cold, has a soiled diaper or needs to be cuddled.
- When trying to comfort a crying baby, a soothing, rhythmic activity is the best approach. Try rocking your baby, taking your baby for a ride in a stroller, or taking your baby for a ride in the car. Monotonous sounds, such as those from an electric fan or a washing machine or vacuum cleaner have also been shown to help. **DO NOT** put your baby on top of any vibrating surface (such as a washing machine that is running). **DO NOT** put your baby in a car seat on top of any vibrating surface (such as a washing machine that is running). If your baby is still crying after more than 20 minutes of gentle motion, let the baby cry himself or herself to sleep.
- In order to promote nighttime sleep, do not let your baby sleep more than 3 hours at a time during the day. Place your baby on his or her back to sleep. **Never** place your baby face down or on his or her stomach to sleep.
- To help relieve your stress, ask your spouse, friend, partner or relative for help. A colicky baby is a two-person job. Ask someone to care for the baby or hire a babysitter so you have a chance to get out of the house, even if it is only for 1 or 2 hours. If you find yourself getting stressed out, put your baby in the crib where it will be safe and leave the room to take a break. **Never** shake or hit your baby!

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your baby seems to be in pain or acts sick.
- Your baby has been crying constantly for more than 3 hours.
- Your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 100.5º F (38.1° C) or higher for more than 1 day.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You are afraid that your stress will cause you to hurt the baby.
- You have shaken your baby.
- Your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**

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