



Baby Colic:

Learn To Care For Your Crying Baby



CHARLES B. WANG
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

If Your Baby Cries A Lot And Cannot Be Comforted, He Or She May Have Baby Colic.

Crying is normal for infants. It is their way of expressing their needs. Infants cry when they are hungry, hurt, or uncomfortable. However, when an infant cries a lot for no apparent reason, he or she may have baby colic. Baby colic is a very common condition. It does not mean there is anything wrong with the baby or parents.

An infant who has baby colic:

- Cries for more than a total of three hours a day, more than three days a week, and for more than 3 weeks
- Cries intensely during the same time each day, often during the evening
- Has difficulty falling and staying asleep
- Cannot be comforted or soothed

If your infant has baby colic, he or she may show the following signs when crying:

- A flushed or red face
- A swollen stomach that feels tight
- Clenched hands
- Curled up legs

Baby Colic Does Not Last Forever

Baby colic is a normal part of your infant's development and will improve over time. It does not have any lasting effects. Baby colic starts at about three weeks of age and lasts about two months. Some infants may continue to cry a lot until they are four or five months old.



Check For Other Possible Triggers For Crying

There are no known causes of baby colic, and crying may result from different things. If your infant is crying, always first check to see if your infant is:

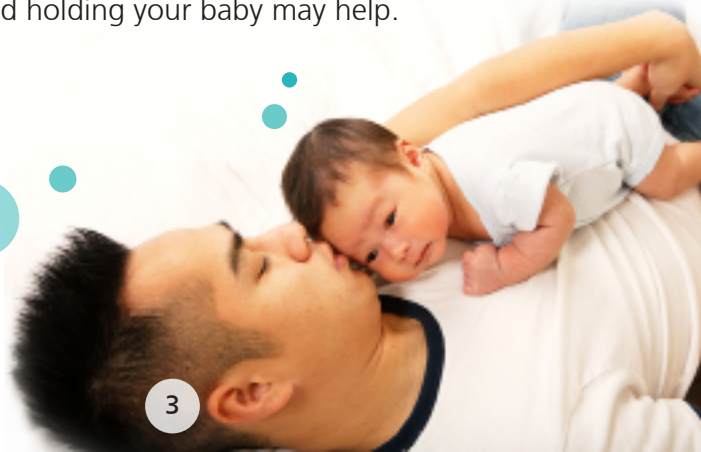
Sick: Always check first for fever with a rectal thermometer because crying may be a sign of an infection. Take your baby to see the doctor if his or her temperature is greater than 100.4 Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius.

Hungry or Thirsty: Try feeding your infant to see if hunger or thirst is the problem. Most infants need to be fed every two to four hours.

Uncomfortable: Make sure your infant is not too hot or cold. Also, see if your infant's diaper needs to be changed or if the diaper or clothing is too tight. Check your infant's fingers and toes to make sure there is nothing entangled or causing pain, such as jewelry or loose thread.

Tired: Your baby may cry if he or she is tired and just has trouble calming down. You can try to soothe him or her with a bath, massage, swaddling, and rocking. If boredom may be the problem, try to play with your baby or give your baby attention.

Upset by Too Much Noise: When babies have too much stimulation, they may cry uncontrollably. Taking your baby to a quiet, dark room and holding your baby may help.



Help Soothe Your Child

If you have checked for all possible triggers, and your infant continues to cry, try different ways to comfort your child:

- Hold and stroke your infant's back during a crying episode.
- Burp your infant after feeding.
- Put your infant in a car seat and go for a ride. The motion may soothe your baby. Pushing your baby in a stroller or a swing may be soothing too.
- Play soft music or have some form of white noise in the background. Low constant noise like the sound of a radio, ticking clock, running clothes dryer, or fan can be soothing
- Swaddle or wrap your infant in a blanket to make him or her feel safe and secure.
- Give your infant a pacifier, warm bath, or a massage.

If You Have Concerns, Talk To Your Child's Doctor

If your infant continues to cry a lot, speak with your child's doctor to make sure that the crying is not due to a health problem. Seek immediate medical attention if your infant's crying is associated with an injury, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, bloody stool, hives, or rash.



**Don't
Forget To
Take Care Of
Yourself
Too**

Colic can be stressful for you and your child. You may get very upset or feel anxious and guilty, but it is not your fault. If you feel overwhelmed, get support from your spouse, family, and friends. Ask them to help you look after your infant, so you can take a break or sleep. Eat a well-balanced diet and exercise.

Remember, no matter how upset or frustrated you are, never shake, hit, or smother your baby. If the stress becomes too much, you may want to seek help from your doctor.



CHARLES B. WANG
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

General Info Line / 諮詢熱線
(212) 226-8339

Website / 網址
www.cbwchc.org

268 Canal Street, New York, NY 10013
Internal Medicine / 內科 (212) 379-6998
Obstetrics & Gynecology (OB/GYN) / 婦產科 (212) 966-0228

125 Walker Street, 2/F, New York, NY 10013
Pediatrics / 兒科 (212) 226-3888
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131-72 40th Road, Flushing, NY 11354
Internal Medicine / 內科 (718) 587-1111
Obstetrics & Gynecology (OB/GYN) / 婦產科 (718) 886-1287
Dental / 牙科 (718) 587-1111

136-26 37th Avenue, Flushing, NY 11354
Pediatrics / 兒科 (718) 886-1222

137-43 45th Avenue, Flushing, NY 11355
Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and Gynecology /
內科、兒科及婦科 (929) 362-3006

Health Education Department / 健康教育部
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Social Work Department / 社工部
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