

6-Month Sleep Regression: What to Know & What to Do



What Is a Sleep Regression?



Waking More at Night

Your baby may wake more frequently overnight, fight naps, or seem fussier at bedtime.



Driven by Development

Rolling, sitting up, and trying to crawl—their brain is prioritizing practice over rest.



Temporary Phase

Most regressions last about 2–6 weeks. Things will start to settle again before you know it.

Why It Happens at 6 Months



Developmental Leaps

Big brain growth makes sleep less predictable as new skills take center stage.



Increased Awareness

Babies become more aware of surroundings—ceiling fans, dogs, or you leaving the room can feel stimulating or upsetting.



Growth Spurts

Physical growth spurts can trigger extra hunger and more frequent night wakings.



Any Time It Can Occur

Regressions can happen at any time due to changes in development, sleep patterns, or shifts in the environment.



Common Milestone

Although they commonly happen at certain months, every baby's timeline is unique. There is nothing wrong with your baby.

Sleep Needs at 6 Months



12–15 Hours Total

Your baby still needs 12–15 hours of sleep per day, even during a regression.



2 to 3 Naps

Daytime naps remain an important part of your baby's total sleep needs.



6–8 Hour Stretches

At night, babies may sleep in longer stretches of 6 to 8 hours, though occasional wake-ups are completely normal.



2–3 Hour Wake Windows

At this age, babies typically stay awake for 2–3 hours between naps. Too long or too short can affect nighttime sleep.



Nap Flexibility

Some days naps may be tough. If your baby resists, take a break and try again in 20–30 minutes.

Tips to Help Your Baby Through This Phase



Stick to a Bedtime Routine

The predictability you create can make a big difference in how smoothly your baby goes down. A simple, calming routine signals it's time to wind down.



Lay Baby Down Awake

Place your baby on their back when sleepy but still awake. This helps them learn to fall asleep on their own and reduces the risk of SIDS.



Keep Night Wakings Calm

Avoid bright lights or stimulation. Gentle shushes and pats for reassurance are all they need to feel safe.



Watch for Hunger Cues

Growth spurts may mean extra feedings. If your baby seems hungry, offering a little more can help reduce night wakings.



Keep the Sleep Space Safe

Use a firm mattress with no loose blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals. Keep the room cool, dark, and quiet to minimize distractions.

A Note on Rolling & Safe Sleep

- ❏ If your baby starts rolling onto their tummy on their own during sleep, you don't need to move them back. As long as they get there themselves, they are safe.

You're Doing an Incredible Job

This sleep regression **won't last forever**. Most babies settle back into a routine within a couple of weeks.

A few small, consistent changes can go a long way in keeping your baby safe and helping everyone get better rest.

Hang in there, trust the process, and **don't hesitate to reach out for support** when you need it. You are not in this alone.

References

- ❏ References: American Psychological Association (APA), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Zero to Three, HealthySteps.