



## What to do when your Baby Cries During Feeds or has Colic

**Try to stay calm when feeding your baby. If you're really struggling and your baby is crying perhaps with Colic, try to share the responsibility. Perhaps you can express some milk for your partner to give to your baby.**

- It's important to avoid 'forced' feeding or over-feeding your baby. If you're worried your baby isn't getting enough milk, ask your Health Visitor for advice.
- Feeding your baby in a room that is quiet, calm and restful is a good idea. Make sure there are no distractions, bright lights or noise.
- Soothing techniques can help, but every baby is different so don't get disheartened if this doesn't work for you. Try cradling your baby face down on the forearm and gently swinging them. If your baby is colicky (which is crying with apparent discomfort in his/her tummy) just picking them up can provide comfort but try to avoid picking up and putting down too much, which can simply over-stimulate your baby and cause more crying.

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**For additional fact sheets see [www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)**

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## What to do when your Baby Cries During Feeds

- Carrying your baby around in a papoose or sling can be a great comfort for a colicky baby. Other soothing techniques to try include giving your baby a warm bath or trying some baby massage. Continuous movement, such as pushing your baby backwards and forwards in the pram, can sometimes help, and lots of babies are soothed by 'white noise' (e.g. the sound of a running washing machine).
- When breastfeeding, babies can sometimes gulp too much air or struggle to latch on to the nipple, making them fretful during feeds. It helps to finish feeding on one breast at a time, and making sure your baby is properly positioned at the breast (at an angle of 30-45 degrees) - ask your Health Visitor to check your baby's position if you're having feeding problems. Breastfeeding groups and counsellors may also be available in your area to support and advise you.
- If you're bottle feeding, sit your baby upright when you feed to ensure they don't swallow too much air. Make sure the bottle teat is always full and try to avoid over-shaking the bottle. Try alternating teat flow/size - 'fast flow' teats with larger or several holes may help, as holes which are too small can cause your baby to suck harder and swallow air, causing discomfort.
- Try to burp your baby regularly (1 – 2 times during feeds and once after). To do this, sit your baby upright or hold them against your shoulder whilst gently rubbing/patting their back or tummy until they burp.
- Colic is a common, temporary condition which causes excessive crying in an otherwise healthy baby. If you suspect your baby has colic, keep a cry diary and discuss the issue with your Health Visitor. Below are 3 causes of colicky symptoms which you can get further advice about from your Health Visitor:

### Transient Lactose Deficiency

Sometimes babies are temporarily unable to break down lactose, a natural sugar in both breast and formula milk, which can cause bloating and wind. Adding lactose drops (such as Colief Infant Drops) to formula milk can help digestion and make babies less prone to excessive crying.

### Milk sensitivity

Your baby might have an allergy to milk. Your Health Visitor may suggest trying a hypoallergenic milk formula or a cow milk free diet if you're breastfeeding to see if this helps.

### Trapped wind

Trapped wind is a common cause of colic. Simeticone drops can help to release bubbles of trapped air in your baby's digestive system – ask your Health Visitor for more information.

### Could it be something else?

Other conditions can cause excessive crying, such as constipation and gastro-oesophageal reflux (GORD). If your baby has other symptoms, such as blood in the stools and vomiting, speak to your GP.

### Getting help

Coping with a crying baby can be distressing and it's important that you take time out if you're finding it hard to cope. Don't forget you can phone your Health Visitor for advice or speak to them in person during clinic hours. The charity CRY-SIS offers valuable support at [bit.ly/1qiP6C0](http://bit.ly/1qiP6C0). If you are worried that your baby is more seriously ill, you should seek prompt medical advice as soon as possible.

### Additional reading

NHS Choices has lots of advice on colic here:  
[bit.ly/1pNoGdO](http://bit.ly/1pNoGdO)

Parenting organisation NCT also features tips and info here:  
[bit.ly/1IFiv8k](http://bit.ly/1IFiv8k)

### References

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Colic-infantile [online]. 2012.**

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