

Your baby cries and cries

It seems to last for an eternity. You carry it in your arms, change its diapers, feed it: still, nothing happens. It becomes very annoying, even unbearable. At that moment, you are almost tempted to pick up your baby and shake it violently if only to have some peace and quiet.

Do not shake your baby: shaking can cause serious and sometimes even deadly brain damage!



*«During the first months after birth,
babies cry often and for no
any apparent reason.»*

For further help* please contact

- Your paediatrician
- Children's hospital helpline
- Parent's Helpline
- Parent's Emergency Number: tel 044 261 88 66
- Your local social services
- Child Protection Groups.

*Some of these counsel institutes may not be free of charge.

Englisch

Based on the brochure «Never shake your baby»
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«Help! My baby won't stop crying.»

A guidebook for parents



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Yet the baby still continues to cry

You have tried absolutely everything you can and yet your baby still continues to cry. You now start feeling tired or angry. Now, there is only one thing to do: lay your child on its back in its cot, turn off the lights, leave the room closing the door behind you. By doing so, you have the chance to get away from your child and calm down. Ask your partner to take care of the child for you for an hour or so, giving you a moment to relax. Sometimes talking to a person you trust over the phone can be of help too.

Your baby will probably continue to cry during this time but leaving it in its cot for a short while will not harm the baby. In any case, it is less serious than having you lose your temper and shaking or hitting the baby.

If the baby starts crying differently

It is normal for an infant to cry, however, it is important to note any changes in its manner of crying.

Contact your paediatrician or the nursing consultant if your child...

- cries longer than usual
- cries louder than usual
- seems to be ill, or
- the way it cries worries you.

When your baby cries it does so for a certain reason though it is not always easy to find out why.

Healthy infants cry when...

- they are hungry or tired
- it is time to change their diapers
- they feel ill
- they wish to hear their parents' voices or need physical contact
- you are nervous or overworked.

In average, healthy infants cry two to three hours a day, sometimes even day and night.



What you can try

- carry your baby snuggled up close
- walk or rock the baby softly while holding it in your arms
- talk, sing gently or whisper something to your baby's ear
- offer your baby your finger or a dummy if it will take it
- softly rub the baby's stomach or its back
- feed your baby.

Shaking babies is very dangerous

Babies have weak neck muscles and often struggle to support their heads. By shaking your baby, its head falls backwards and forwards uncontrollably. This violent movement is often the cause for internal bleeding of the brain – even though the baby's head has not hit anything. The brain of an infant is very fragile and sensitive. Sudden movements without holding its head or throwing the baby up in the air can already be a threat to its life. Most of the children's injuries heal quickly and without consequences. But this is not the case for cranial and brain injuries as these may result in serious irreversible disabilities or even be the cause of death.

Make sure that all who take care of your baby know about the risks involved when shaking an infant.